

# TODAY'S SPEECH

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## LOOKING AHEAD

Look for the next issue to appear in February, with a wide spread of topics and points of view — all dealing with *your* speech needs.

. . .

Look even further ahead to April 9-11, 1959, when the Speech Association of the Eastern States (the oldest professional speech organization in the nation) will hold its *Golden Jubilee* Convention at the Henry Hudson Hotel, New York City. Plan to attend and profit from the special programs that are in preparation.

**Speech Is Civilization -- Silence Isolates**

# One Man's Opinion

The September issue was "out of stock" a few days after publication, because of unexpectedly large orders from college teachers who use it in their classes as supplementary reading. We'll try to keep this from happening again. But because costs are high, it is impractical to print many more copies than we are sure will be required.

For this reason, be sure to send in your renewal subscription in ample time. Most of our subscribers (except the membership of The Speech Association of the Eastern States) subscribe on a calendar-year basis. This means that the present (November) issue will be the last one to be received — unless the renewal is sent in.

Subscribers have several choices, each with its own advantages:

1. By joining the Speech Association of the Eastern States you not only get TODAY'S SPEECH but also have the satisfaction of supporting your professional organization — and have the privilege of attending the annual three-day conference in which problems from every part of the Speech field are discussed by experts. This year's convention will be held April 9-11, at the Henry Hudson Hotel, New York City. Membership is welcomed from all who are interested. Just send for application blanks to the SAES Executive Secretary, Wiley C. Bowyer, Mineola Public Schools, 200 Emory Road, Mineola, L.I., New York. (The membership fee is \$3.50 per year.)

2. By sending Mr. Bowyer \$7.50 you will become a SPONSOR of TODAY'S SPEECH as well as a member of SAES.

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6. "Club subscriptions" in numbers of 20 or more (all to be sent to one address) may be had for \$1.00 per year, or for 50 cents for two consecutive issues. This provision is especially helpful for use in school or by Toastmasters Clubs and other organizations.

## CHANGE OF DATE

Beginning with Volume VII, the dates of publication hereafter will be February (not January, as heretofore), April, September, and November. Please note: *Do not expect a January issue.* The February issue will be placed in the mails on January 15.

The reason for this change is that the January issue, which has been mailed in mid-December, has been getting lost in the flood of Christmas mail. Copies have been delayed in delivery. Some may have been mislaid in transit — and we suspect that many have been mislaid in homes after their arrival. We hope everyone will be pleased with the new post-Christmas date.

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# THE LAND OF SILENCE

by R. Avis, edited by Robert West

*Dr. West, Director of the Speech and Hearing Clinic of Brooklyn College, is distinguished as co-author of The Rehabilitation of Speech and numerous other publications and as a long-time senior member of the speech therapy profession. He is well-known to readers of TODAY'S SPEECH for the unmitigated common sense and mischievous spirit of his earlier articles in our pages.*

(Editor's note: This is a portion of the official report of Captain Richard Avis upon his return from his astounding space journey. As most of our readers are aware, his party discovered a planet that was practically identical with our earth, except that everything reversible on it was reversed: the rotation around the mother star was opposite to ours; the people looked like mirror images of earthlings; they were generally left handed; and they did not speak orally, only manually.)

AT FIRST THE MEN IN OUR PARTY WERE BAFFLED and depressed by the behavior of the crowds in the big cities, deathly silent, but marked by finger flutterings that made us think of the moving of the sensitive antennae of insects. Of course we guessed at once that it was some sort of communication; but the speed was such as to disconcert us completely. We soon found, however, many willing guides to show us around and to teach us the meanings of the hand signs. Bit by bit we learned the code. Our mentors were kind, though they often were amused to see us struggle. They said it was very funny to see grown men sign like babies.

When we were proficient enough to ask questions, we quizzed our guides about many things, among them the origin of this remarkable system of communication. This is what they told us. I suspect that a good deal of the early part of the story is mythical.

It began in a verdant valley of the land of silence. The people in this valley had no communication except rather primitive animal cries. Though they were gregarious, their communal life was that of a pack rather than that of a gens. The leader of the pack was strong, forceful, and domineering. His name was .....<sup>\*</sup> I shall call him simply *the leader*. This leader decreed†

<sup>\*</sup> Here, of course, I have no way of indicating his name, since it was never sounded, and our Earthly printing is visual representation of sounded symbols.

† This is what leads me to think that this history is partly myth. If they had as yet no means of communication, how did he issue his decree?

that all members of the pack should report to him (or to deputies) every evening all they had done during the day. He also gave his people the code to employ. Painstakingly he showed that the sign for *sky* was the holding up of the first finger on the right hand; the sign for *water* was the first finger of the left hand, etc. The sign for *God* was the holding up of the left fist. He thus named all the objects, ideas, qualities, attitudes, acts, and relationships that his people would need to discuss with him. Since he had ten fingers to use in his code, the possibilities of his system were limitless — at least he had about ten billion possible combinations of fingers to employ. But combinations involving the third and fourth fingers were not easy to negotiate, so he used only the thumbs and the first two fingers of the two hands. That gave him a completely adequate code so far as the number of signs was concerned. He even had plenty of signs in reserve to use for new ideas or new things discovered. "There is now," he thought, "no need for change except for the occasional addition of a sign."

But change started at once. People soon saw the advantage of communication and employed it, not only with the leader and his lieutenants, but with each other. The habit spread rapidly, and in the spreading the code underwent marked alterations. For example: by a curious coincidence, the sign for *cat* was made with the right thumb and the right second finger; while that for *woman* was the same except with the left hand. A few right-handers got the signs confused. It was amusing at first, but people soon saw that, though the signs were confused, the meaning was not. Contextual implications guided the reader of the signs so that the meaning was clear. Gradually, one by one, people adopted the habit of signing *cat* and *woman* by the same hand — either hand — whichever was



more skillful. Thus many homophenes<sup>‡</sup> were developed. No confusion resulted, except in the climaxes of jokes, and there it was intended. The people reverted to the original code given by the leader only to insure accuracy when confusion resulted in spite of the context. Then one day a man injured his right, second finger. He could not sign *bad*, because *bad* requires the use of that finger alone, with the second finger of the left hand. So he substituted the right, first finger. It looked odd to his readers, but again no confusion resulted, although he really was making the sign for *cheerful*. So people got the idea that the easy way to sign is often as good as the "correct" way. Then the leader's lieutenants tacitly accepted this principle and the changes involved. The lieutenants recognized a difference between the "acceptable" and the "correct."

At this juncture something developed to arrest the rate of change and to stabilize the signs, *viz.*, the people began to tell stories. These tales were about their leaders, their origins, the animals in the forest, the ignorant, non-signing people in the valley across the lake, the sun, the moon, the stars, the harvests, their babies, their dogs, etc. Some of the story-tellers were more skillful than others. So the people gathered around them to watch and read. Thus encouraged, the tellers repeated their performances over and over again, until their acts became formalized and memorized like piano concertos. The readers, also, memorized the tales, and they were passed on from person to person, and from generation to generation. The signs employed in these stories may or may not have been those originally decreed by the great leader, but now they were given authority by their attachment to the precious sacred thoughts of the stories told. The people felt, therefore, that they must not violate the rightness of these words. The story-tellers became their signing exemplars and those to whom they might go to ascertain the "correctness" of any sign about which they were uncertain. They had then a fullblown language—*nay*, a fullblown "manuage."

We come now to the present, to the codes of communication in style today in the Land of Silence. It happens that some of the users of manuage employ their hands, not only for communication, but also for the earning of a living. They hew wood, draw water, and pile stones. Their hands become stiff and calloused. They must, perforce, syncopate the idioms of their manuage and

elide the manipulation of their words. Hence there develops a "worker's" style, in distinction from that of the "thinkers," who use their hands for nothing more strenuous than eating, dressing, bathing, and recreation. Now, peculiarly, in this society those who must work with their hands are regarded as socially inferior to those who need not do so. Hence the manuage of those who employ the idioms and verbal forms of the workers is regarded as "sub-standard," even when the communicators are not actually themselves workers, but non-working members, rather, of the workers' families or their communities.

Now it also happens that the non-workers are extremely philanthropic. Their most earnest desire is to help the poor, benighted workers, and their wives and children, to use a more beautiful manuage. Hence they organize classes in the schools of the Valley in which the baneful effects of the workers' dialects can be overcome. There develops, therefore, a group of teachers of manuage and a guild of such teachers, called M. A. V. (the Manuage Association of the Valley). This Association sets the standards of the Valley.

The cities of the Valley are located at the points of intersection of the roads and are thus the places of meeting of those who would go from one area of the valley to another. The people of the cities, therefore, are constantly under the influence of many manuagic dialects. The styles of the city become more general than those of the rural areas. Thus the people of the city look with both disdain and amusement at the parochial styles of the country folks. Often in their theatres the actors imitate the wierd digitations of the country folks, to the screaming amusement of the city people who watch the show. The unexpected flick of the tipmost phalynx of the index finger seems hugely funny.

As the M.A.V. has attained more and more influence, it has seemed to its members that its duties include the manuage training, not only of the workers, but of the children of all groups, and by *children* they mean the people in school of whatever age. They have even organized manuage groups made up of completely adult persons. Most of these students, children and adults, are not handicapped in accuracy or speed of manuistic communication, but they are nevertheless considered to be in need of digital training. To motivate these manuage classes they are referred to as Digitalis§

‡ The editor objected to this technical term; but Captain Avis defended it by saying that he learned it in a required, freshman course in speech.

§ Of course I take liberties in my translation here. They do not have the true foxglove in the Land of Silence. The "fingers" of their digitalis plant point up instead of down. The drug from the leaf is the same as our digitalis, but it is seldom used as a heart medicine with the Silent people. They seem not to need it.



Clubs, with the foxglove as the emblem of the order.

One of the members of our party, Lt. Tanaka, is a stutterer; and he was curious to know whether there was any stuttering-like behavior among the manuge users. A medical specialist whom we met took our stutterer to his university. The impression that Tanaka made there was profound. The learned doctors were amazed at the phenomenon of oral speech; but they were particularly astonished that Earthlings should continue to employ for communication the neuromuscular machinery of vegetative, respiratory, and emotional reactions. The doctors explained to us that with the Silent People it is considered improper to exhibit the functions of the alimentary and respiratory tracts except in the privacy of the family. Only very young children are forgiven for audible laryngeal activity in "company" or in public places. The Silent People have no public eating or drinking places. Oral speech would be repugnant to them. After this explanation by the doctors we understood the looks of consternation that we Earthlings received when we orally conversed in a public place. In fact, we soon apologized to each other for our oral speech as one would for an eructation.

But to return to the doctors: They said, "No, we have scarcely any communicative behavior like that of your Lt. Tanaka." The few cases that do exist, they explained, have been of recent development and apparently are caused by the reactions of the patients to the standards set by the manuge teachers. The doctors emphasized the point that, aside from the disgustingly unsocial aspect of oral speech, it could never be very efficient, since it employs neuromuscular mechanisms that are already overloaded with primitive functions. They pointed out that the hands are not so pre-empted and are precisely voluntary. "The hand," one of them declared, "is the seat of intellectual skill and therefore the proper instrument of speech."

In the manuge teaching of adults complicated conventions have grown up. Women must sign with the hands in the prone position; men, in the supine. Women must hold their hands shoulder high; men waist high. The use of sparkling jewelry on the fingers is considered improper. To sign while picking the teeth or scratching the ear would get one thrown out of any high class theatre. What are the explanations of these conventions? Some may be rational; and some may be capriciously arbitrary like the styles of dress among Earthlings. But, of course, the fickleness of the manuge stand-

ards greatly contributes to the professional prestige of the M. A. V. and to the incomes of their members. The M.A.V. has actually been accused of initiating some of the changes of style.

One of the interesting secondary effects of the teaching of manuge is a rare condition designated by a manuagic unit consisting of the rapid, independent flexion and extension of the fingers of both hands. This word in manuge I have translated as *fluttering* in English. Fluttering appears sometimes as a block in the flow of word signs, sometimes in the repetition of these signs, and sometimes, to the dismay of the Silent People, in the production of vocal grunts, squeals, and snorts, while the flow of manuge is interrupted. They tell me that, before the advent of the manuge teacher, fluttering was not seen; but, now that people are developing the notion that "good" people have "good" manuge, fluttering appears. Some flutterers communicate very smoothly when they are talking to children, to dogs, or to themselves, but flutter very badly when they address equals or superiors. They flutter most when they are in the presence of manuge teachers. One doctor in the Land of Silence told me that fluttering is rooted in "nervousness." Another, who is a flutterer himself, told me that he thought that the very symbol for fluttering tends to spread the condition symbolized. Is fluttering a disease or a dis-ease? That is what the doctors of the Land of Silence are debating.

My return to Earth was a great shock to me. I can see now why tranquilizers are necessary to life among the noisy Earthlings. I now list the advantages of manuge over language:

1. It is quieter, less nerve-wracking.
2. It is more genteel.
3. It is more precise in denotation.
4. With it you do not have to see and read what you do not want to understand. With the television of the Land of Silence all you need do to shut out the commercial is to look away or close your eyes.
5. Manuagic communication discourages idle conversation when one is working with the hands, driving a car, playing cards, etc.
6. With manuagic communication one can end a quarrel simply by putting one's hands over his eyes (and peaking through between the fingers).

For these reasons I recommend manuge for our earth, and I offer my services as a teacher of manuge.

# CLARENCE B. RANDALL:

## *Spokesman For Industry*

by William S. Tacey

*Professor of Speech at the University of Pittsburgh, Mr. Tacey has had wide experience in the speech problems of management and labor. Mr. Randall, formerly President of Inland Steel, is President Eisenhower's special consultant on economic foreign policy.*

RANDALL'S FIRST RECOLLECTION of his early speaking is that of playing Santa Claus for family Christmas celebrations. At first his mother wrote out appropriate comments for him to memorize and use as he distributed gifts. Eventually he wrote his own wisecracks, but, he recalls, the family did not always think them funny. His mother gave him early training in elocution, entering him in a county-seat contest in Waverly. Greatly to his surprise, but not his mother's, he won a silver medal. Among his early selections were, "The Crooked Mouth Family" (with appropriate facial contortions) and "Horatius at the Bridge." At his high school commencement he represented his class by giving the valedictory speech. He conveniently forgets most of the details, but believes that the subject may have been cuneiform writing.

In Newark Valley an annual intellectual highlight was the lecture series, consisting usually of five lecturers, one a humorist, and a set of Swiss bell-ringers. The programs were almost always a sellout at the Congregational Church. The lectures which he remembers best are Conwell's "Acres of Diamonds" and Thomas Dixon's "Can a Leopard Change His Spots?" Randall helped his father manage the series, posting bills and selling tickets. At Wyoming Seminary he continued speaking and won a declamation contest.

When he entered college the crimson H of Harvard had a fascination for Randall, but his scant one hundred pounds of brawn made the earning of one seem hopeless. Under his mother's urging he agreed to try out for the freshman debate team, dutifully writing and memorizing a suitable speech. With a class of twenty-five hopefuls he went to the tryouts, and in torments of anxiety awaited his turn. When his name was called, he started successfully, but after two minutes his mind blanked, and he rushed off the stage to seek the solace of his mother's arms.

The next morning he learned of his reprieve from complete failure, for in the *Harvard Crimson* his name was listed as one who had been selected for the debate squad. Judge Stone, the coach, agreed to keep him on his promise never again to memorize a speech. Randall's proud boast today is that he never has memorized another speech. His debating at Harvard was successful enough to win him a place on the varsity and in his senior year the Coolidge Debating Prize. In 1915 he reached the finals in the Law School's Ames competition.

The torment suffered in his debate tryout made Randall a stalwart supporter of the extemporaneous style of speaking. Rarely does he use any other. In his *Creed for Free Enterprise* he states that "my hallmark has been an off-the-cuff talk at a businessman's luncheon or dinner, done in the spirit of the occasion and without manuscript." He argues in *Over My Shoulder*, his own "reminiscence," that "each new audience, of whatever sort, is totally different from the last one. . . . The man without a manuscript has a tremendous advantage, for he can speak to the people as he sees them. . . ." For him "the ad lib is what gives life and color to a speech. . . . It puts the integrity of his own personality into all that the speaker says, and audiences will forgive him much because of it."

In his early days at Ishpeming, Michigan, he never missed an opportunity to speak, whether the audience was a Sunday School class, a picnic, or a luncheon club, and each time it was his custom to stand up and say what was on his mind. The practice of extemporizing his speeches paid large returns in 1932 when he first spoke at an annual meeting of the American Iron and Steel Institute. He was assigned the subject of "Mining Taxation." Charles Schwab introduced him a short time before noon. As if on signal the audience began to leave for the bar. Angered, Randall tucked his manu-

script in his pocket and shouted, "Mr. Chairman, that's what's wrong with mining taxation. The steel industry has been walking out on it for years." His speech not only brought him the favorable attention of Charlie Schwab and Eugene Grace, but won him a prize for the best paper at the meeting.

Once during a Chicago Community Fund drive he was assigned to speak at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange at closing time. Just as he began to speak he noticed a portly trader edging out a door. "Look there," he cried in a surge of red-faced anger. "Look at that man walking out the door! He thinks he is walking out on the Community Fund, but he isn't. That fat man is turning his back on an old lady dying of cancer in an attic two blocks from here. He is walking out on a little baby, born the day after her father was killed in a saloon. She can't have her eyes saved from blindness because that fat man doesn't care."

The speech was so highly regarded that it was circulated widely among the nation's Community Funds.

The origin of a speech by Randall is in an idea or opinion which may be buried too deeply "for the faint beginnings to be discernible." For sturdy development of "an orderly set of opinions, a working tool that is rather hard to come by in business," he recommends "good talk with keen minds."

Good reading is equally important, since talking and reading both serve as good correctives on tentative opinions held, and as ways of "enticing one's mind to follow altogether new avenues of thought." After the initial idea is partially developed, Randall believes that expressing it privately is beneficial. When a newly formed opinion is tried before "a group of merciless friends, the fat gets trimmed off it in short order, and thereafter you feel much safer in exposing it to an audience who can't talk back." A further advantage of this plan is that new implications occur to the speaker and he notes places where further documentation is needed.

Randall does not believe that an executive should follow the practice of circulating his manuscript for correction by his colleagues, since it will be "watered down" by everyone who sees it, and will turn out "to be the old familiar eye-wash," since "only the platitudes will be left." He asserts that "words are persuasive when they are the heart throbs of an individual, and a speech . . . to be effective must mirror the man."

Ordinarily, Randall does not write a speech. His immediate preparation comes within forty-eight hours of the delivery of the speech, and consists of intensive thought on the subject. An outline is formulated in his mind, and he is then usually ready to speak without notes. Randall admits that such a speech often "gets a very bad press," but he believes that the advantages of being able to suit the speech to the audience and the occasion offset any of the disadvantages.

To Randall the idea of the ghost-written speech is abhorrent. "We all know," he says, "the signs of the ghost-written speech, the folksy gaiety that isn't his, the classical allusions from books we know he hasn't read, and the punch line that he couldn't possibly have thought up." The obvious flaw in the practice of reading the words of someone else is that the business executive cannot "say what he thinks." "The audience feels let down and goes home convinced that . . . big businessmen aren't much. They came to hear him, and heard someone else. They would rather hear him say things badly . . . than listen to a fraud."

Randall says further that "industry's story cannot be told to the public by professional writers and public-relations people. It can only be told by the people who know . . . and form policy on the subject. There's just one way . . . stand up on your hind legs and tell people what you believe in." For those who dissent from his opinions Randall suggests that they "give voice to their dissent," thus "stimulating once again the American habit of debate, from whence has come our wisdom in the past."

Randall has been blessed with an out-size and penetrating voice, his own estimate being that he might "have had a great career as a circus barker." To his voice he credits much of his success in speaking. "I have barnstormed the . . . country," he writes in *Over My Shoulder*, "enlisting that same loud voice on behalf of a wide variety of issues."

Since his unhappy experience at Harvard as a freshman he has never been without "that same gone feeling in the pit of my stomach" while waiting to speak. Invariably he regrets having accepted the invitation to speak and wishes fervently that it was over. Yet as soon as he rises to speak he feels "the same old thrill," and takes his inspiration from the reaction he sees in the "half dozen key faces" in the audience before him. "All the fears and apprehensions melt in the warmth of that human response. . . ."

Of all audiences he prefers one composed only of women since they are "alert," and "if they like



you they let you know it in unmistakable terms." The mixed audience of men and women is his second choice, for the women help keep the men sober and attentive, but the worst of all is the occasional large banquet of men only. The most exciting audience for him is the college commencement, although "little attention is actually paid to what the speaker says, but he himself will never forget the wave of faith in the future of America that comes surging over him as he looks into the faces before him."

Randall's audiences have varied from such "safe" groups as the National Association of Manufacturers, the Investment Bankers Association of America, and the Michigamme (Mich.) High School Commencement to those whose platforms he has shared with Roger Baldwin of the American Civil Liberties Union and Mortimer Adler of the University of Chicago. The Chicago regional meeting of the Chamber of Commerce heard him give an impromptu speech which won him a Freedom's Foundation Award. In Boston he faced several thousand youngsters who had come to see Mickey Rooney perform for the benefit of the Greater Boston Fund. Harvard University, Dartmouth College, and University of Michigan Commencements have enjoyed his speeches, as has the Garden Club of Lake Forest, Illinois. Wherever he finds an audience Clarence Randall is willing to speak for the beliefs which he holds dear.

To his fellow businessmen Randall offers a challenge for them to express their opinions, since he holds self-expression as "an indispensable part of the leadership which the public expects from the businessman." Not only are speaking and writing "the most satisfying activities" of life, but they are the best available defense against the "glibness of the social planner, which rings so falsely in our ears." The brilliant mind in industry will tend to burn itself out unless its owner can communicate to those of lesser intellectual powers the advanced

ideas which his brilliant mind conceives. "Writing and speaking English clearly and concisely are indispensable as working tools in modern business." Randall is merciless in his criticism of the businessman who "cries out daily for a champion" to fight the battles of free enterprise, but who, when invited to speak himself is "tied up at the moment" with next quarter's production schedule and who "finds it very hard" to write speeches. For such men Randall says that the public has a right to suspect that "our fervor is based solely on a selfish desire to preserve the status quo in which we are thought to be a privileged class."<sup>8</sup> Because so few people are willing to listen to the businessman Randall prescribes as a remedy that he become a community leader, becoming the man who not only breaks production records, but who also breaks records in "character-forming, better schools, and better politics."

Randall is bullish on future speaking by business executives since he believes that each can "follow his own bent" and become "intelligently articulate" on the subjects which give him "the most challenge." As a result, inevitably "the influence of businessmen will be brought to bear on all subjects." To newcomers he sounds a warning that "the next generation of businessmen will be articulate, knowing what they believe and entering joyously into the battle of ideas, or there will be no business as we have known it heretofore."<sup>10</sup>

## REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> Clarence B. Randall, *Creed for Free Enterprise*. Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1952, p. 143.
- *Over My Shoulder: A Reminiscence*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1956.
- <sup>2</sup> Richard and Gladys Harkness, "Private Life of a Steel Boss," *Saturday Evening Post*, CCXXV (December 6, 1952), 30.
- <sup>3</sup> Randall, Clarence B. *A Creed for Free Enterprise*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1952.
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 8, 9.
- <sup>5</sup> Sheehan, Robert. "Clarence Randall: Statesman from Steel." *Fortune*, XLIX (January, 1954), 120-122.
- <sup>6</sup> *Creed for Free Enterprise*, pp. 126, 127.
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 12, 13.
- <sup>8</sup> *Creed for Free Enterprise*, p. 92.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9, 10.

## What It Means To Be a 'Spokesman'

A classic statement: "Certainly, gentlemen, it ought to be the happiness and glory of a representative to live in the strictest union, the closest correspondence, and the most unreserved communication with his constituents. Their wishes ought to have great weight with him; their opinion high respect; their business unremitted attention. It is his duty to sacrifice his repose, his pleasure, his satisfaction to theirs; and, above all, ever, and in all cases, to prefer their interest to his own. But

his unbiased opinion, his mature judgment, his enlightened conscience, he ought not to sacrifice to you; to any man, or to any set of men living. These he does not derive from your pleasure; no, nor from the law and the constitution. They are a trust from Providence, for the abuse of which he is deeply answerable. Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion." — Edmund Burke, at Bristol.

# A REDEFINITION OF RHETORIC

by Harry L. Weinberg

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## I

One of the hardy perennials in the hothouse of philosophical debate concerns the supposed amorality of science. It is said that science can only tell us how and what and to some extent why. It cannot tell us what we *ought* to do. It can tell us how to make H-bombs and why they work but not whether we ought to make them. Yet, if we examine scientists at work, they seem to have an almost super-moral attitude toward the necessity for being truthful in every single aspect and moment of scientific procedure. How can we square this pious moralizing with the scientists' own claim of the amorality of their subject?

Some resolution of this argument can be found if we introduce the concept of levels or orders of knowledge. On the first, we find the objects, situations, events, etc., which the scientist manipulates and tests. On the next level, we find his descriptions of these lower order objects together with rules for manipulating them, predictions of what will happen if we do and theories explaining why we get what we get.

So far, we have "complete" objectivity. But this is not the end of the matter. There is still another level involved, a most important one. It consists of a set of rules for using the rules and theories in the level below it. What are some of these rules?

1. Never lie in reporting your observations.

2. Theory must bow down before observation. If the facts do not fit the theory, change it; don't try to warp the facts to fit the theory.

Why? In order to get reliable knowledge. What good is reliable knowledge? Ultimately the answer is that we just hold it to be good. It is an act of faith; it cannot be proved. We might say that reliable knowledge is good because it will contribute to our chances of survival. But this only pushes the argument one step further for we then have to assume on faith that our survival is a good thing. The important point for us in our discussion is that this third level introduces value judgments — moral precepts — which ultimately have to be accepted on faith. It is at this third level that we

have science as a general system, science as method, science as an attitude. At the second level, we have the various sciences, at the third, the science of sciences or science-in-general. If a man remains at the second level, he becomes a technician, a tinkerer. Only when the third level with its explicit moral judgments is incorporated into his behavior does he become a scientist. We can be amoral when using the results of science, but when we do we are no longer acting as scientists.

In short, to be a scientist, one must *learn* the rules and facts of a particular science (second level of knowledge) and rigidly *obey* the rules for using these rules. The third order rules of rules is an invariant under transformation. Put in quasi-mathematical form,  $S=kx$ , where  $S$  = science as method,  $k$  is the third order rules of rules, and  $x$  the second order rules, formulae, etc., of any particular science.

## II

What does all of this have to do with rhetoric? Well, rhetoric, like science, has been proclaimed by many, including Aristotle himself, to be amoral. He defined it as the art of discovering all the available means of persuasion in a given case, and remarked that it can be used for good or evil, but hoped it would be used for good.

But we can discern levels of rhetoric just as we did the levels of science. On the first, we have the audience to be persuaded. At the next level, we have the various rhetorical rules for persuading it, rules of invention, arrangement, delivery, logic, etc. At the third level are the rules for using these rules. What are they? I believe that they should be:

1. Never lie.

2. Always strive to communicate reliable knowledge.

3. Since we are dealing with people, and not objects or animals, never induce non-survival behavior in the audience or oneself.

It seems to me that if we do not include this level in our definition of rhetoric and choose to operate only on the second, we then remain rhetorical technicians and tinkerers — sophists, huck-

sters, propagandists and deserve the contempt and suspicion many scientists and others have for rhetoric, equating it with deception.

Now my suggestion may not seem very different from the strict Aristotelian position on rhetoric. Although Aristotle said rhetoric was amoral, did he not state that it should be used for good, that we should speak the truth because, other things being equal, truth is more persuasive than falsehood? But, as has often been noted, other things are never equal. More importantly, speaking the truth becomes just another means of persuasion among many others, that is, a second level rule. However, if kept at this level it can be used or not used depending on the occasion and whim of the speaker like any other persuasive device. It seems to me that our error has been in not seeing that its most important place is on the third level where *we have no choice* but to use it at all times along with the other rules of that level if we wish to be rhetoricians and not hucksters. At the second level are the truths we tell; how and which are part of the art of persuasion; here we have a choice. At the third level is the constant admonition to tell them and in this there can be no choice.

If our listeners were inanimate objects, our task would be relatively simple. But since they are human, we have the devil to contend with. Who is the devil?

Dale Drum writes:

"As a matter of fact, it is possible to show that there is a 'devil' against the person attempting persuasion, the 'devil' of The-Ego-Defense Mechanisms. It will be suggested that these near universal dynamisms are capable, among other things, of being a 'selective lubricant,' making persuasion easier for the dishonest, harder for the honest. The hopeless feeling honest persuaders sometimes get is not merely imagination; there is some truth in it."

He points out that the defense mechanisms are not necessarily undesirable. They act as "shock-absorbers" and all of us use them and need them. It is when they are used wrongly and to an extreme that we become mentally ill. The demagogue persuades chiefly by leading his audience in the wrong use of them. Our problems will become much easier to solve if we could just ignore them, but to persuade means, in the final analysis, to stir these mechanisms into action. They can be used for good as well as for evil. Drum concludes that if we utilize the rationalization that right will triumph

in the end, and that the inherent goodness in man will make him recognize evil for what it is, we may blind ourselves to the crucial problems and dangers inherent in persuasion.

"If people do by-and-large prefer defensive thinking to realistic analysis, then this is a major problem; and if we do not face it squarely, we will be in grave danger of allowing the demagogues . . . to utilize the techniques of modern communication to increase the power of defensive thinking — and in such an eventuality, we are apt to find our hard-won democratic principles smashed into a ruin that will overshadow even the fall of Rome."

### III

The crux of the situation, I think, is this: if these defense mechanisms operating in the minds of the listeners seem to be blocking the appeals of logic and reason and if persuasion is largely achieved through appeals to them and other motivating factors, there is a great temptation to use them wrongly because this is so much easier than to use them rightfully. And if we do use them wrongly, we become as bad and stupid as the audience we despise, and despise it we must, else we would not attempt to increase its irrational behavior by the misuse of the defense mechanisms. Granted that there are times when it is almost impossible to use them rightfully as, for example, during a war or in times of violence when we are forced to fight fire with fire. But in most speaking situations, these extremes have not been reached — indeed, the misuse of the defense mechanisms increases these extremes of behavior — and we can fight the fire with the water of the reasoned good use of these motivating energies.

Going further, I see the new rhetoric more as fire prevention than fire fighting and should like to define it as, "The Art of *Ethical Persuasion*." Rhetoric would consist of two factors, an invariant and a variable just as science-in-general does. Our formula would read  $R=kx$ , where  $k$  is the set of rules for using the lower order rules and techniques,  $x$ , which vary from speech to speech according to the purpose of the speaker and the occasion. Reflecting this, *every* speech would consist of two parts,  $k$  and  $x$ . The latter would be the arguments for the particular case and the facts and evidence selected to sustain them together with techniques of delivery, etc. The  $k$  would be the constant aim of inducing better, less destructive use of the defense mechanism and other motivating

<sup>1</sup> *The Power of Defensive Thinking*, Dale D. Drum, *Today's Speech*, Vol. 6, No. 1, January, 1958, page 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, page 9



energies in our listeners and ourselves. The techniques for doing this are yet to be worked out and will constitute, I believe, the first really new advance in rhetorical theory and practice in 2000 years. As Dale Drum says,

"Then it would seem that classes in persuasion, books on problem-solving, and related studies should be aimed at 'keeping defense mechanisms in their place' and restricting them to their rightful activities of protection. But, since these are generally easier than realism, it should be obvious this is no small problem."<sup>3</sup>

In effect, the new rhetor will really be a "good man speaking." He will be seeking to learn how, in each speech, not only to persuade on the issues of a given case — vote this way, help the poor, etc. — but also in a sense to "cure" the individuals who are using the defense mechanisms destructively. His first concern is for his listeners as human beings and he seeks to avoid making them less human by reinforcing their irrational behavior. He is an educator in sanity and morality.

There are those who object to this concept by saying that we are not psychiatrists or psychotherapists either by experience or training. But this, I believe, is too restricted a view of psychotherapy. If a demagogue could lead millions into the madness that was Nazism, certainly speech making can also be a force for sanity. As Dr. Abraham Maslow states,

"It must be our clear conviction that not only is every good human being potentially an unconscious therapist, but we must accept the conclusion that we should approve of this, encourage it, teach it. . . . Let people realize clearly that every time they . . . hurt unnecessarily or dominate or reject another human being, they become forces for the creation of psychopathology, even if these be small forces. Let them recognize also that every man who is kind, helpful, decent, psychologically democratic . . . is a psychotherapeutic force even though a small one."<sup>4</sup>

Again, if we object that we do not have time for this in our classes, or that it is too idealistic, or that people expect rhetoric to be a system for achieving personal power, then I believe we deserve to be in the spot we are now in. I do not think that we can avoid the conclusion that in rhetoric amorality is immorality.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., page 8.

<sup>4</sup>Motivation and Personality, A. H. Maslow, Harper & Brothers (New York, 1954), p. 321.

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# O. W. H. — *Conversationalist Extraordinary*

by Egbert S. Oliver

*Author of a series on conversation for TODAY'S SPEECH, Dr. Oliver is Professor of English at Portland State College.*

HOLMES WAS THE FOREMOST TALKER IN BOSTON in a generation of dazzling talkers. Other brilliant lights of conversation were his associates and friends, rather than his opponents; this situation only added to the glory and power of his achievement.

Holmes not only engaged in conversation: he also wrote discourse. Appearing in the first issue of the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1857 was Holmes' book of table-talk presenting the Autocrat, who walked forth as the example *par excellence* of witty, tender, sophisticated, learned, wise discourse. The Autocrat's monologue was discursive and whimsically comprehending, probing but never personally offensive, wide ranging in subject matter, hardly what would be called profound but nevertheless steady of vision and seeing the world whole and solidly.

"American literature had never before been suddenly enriched by an extended piece of writing at once so wise and gay, so felicitous in swift mingling of fact and fancy, so crackling with wit while remaining so warm, so kind" is the summary statement of one critical study (*Literary History of the United States*, p. 559).

Holmes' remarkable series of conversational books included *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* (1858), *The Professor at the Breakfast Table* (1860), *The Poet at the Breakfast Table* (1872), *Over the Teacups* (1891). But the man Holmes himself was greater than the books which came from his flowing pen. He might have been as he himself said, "a Boswell, writing out himself!" but his personality and charm were dominant in rich social and entertainment life. It could be said of him that conversation was his mission, his passion, his crowning glory. Probably few people who are remembered for their conversation ever took the art of talking quite so seriously or consciously as he did.

He once said to his friend James Russell Lowell, also a great talker, "Now, James, let me talk and don't interrupt me." This line is often quoted to prove that Holmes was a monologist, that he monopolized the floor. A long range and overall view of this distinguished talker does not bear out any such charge. That he was often the center of talk

would of course be true, for he had vitality, wit, and a passion for lively mental interplay. He was the kind of person whom a group would center around.

He was a graduate of Harvard with the class of 1829, which he helped to make famous and celebrated by a number of commemorative poems. He read law for a year, but took an M.D. degree. He practiced medicine, was a professor of anatomy at Dartmouth and then at Harvard, a devoted scientist who wrote many scientific papers. He was a poet and, as we have noted, a writer of table-talk. He was also a conversationalist, in his way a character — a public character.

He was five feet four inches tall, but his stature was the only small element in his make-up. His active curiosity and interest entered into every field. He knew theology and photography, rattlesnakes and trotting horses, microscopy and boating. He was even a boxer, interested in the sport and in other boxers. Poetry came from his pen during his whole life. He never shunned company or talk. He could talk with any man on the other's subject, reserving unshown his own great reservoirs of professional knowledge.

He wrote, in 1832, "It is strange, very strange to me, that many men should devote themselves so exclusively to the study of their own particular callings. . . . The knowledge of a man who confines himself to one object bears the same relation to that of the liberal scholar that the red or violet ray of a prism does to the blended light of the sunbeam."

For many academicians the professor's chair is an insulating stool, cutting them off from the common currents of life; but not so with Holmes. His professor's podium was a place of entry into life's arena. One student described Holmes' entry into the anatomy class of Harvard medical school: "He enters, and is greeted by a mighty shout and stamp of applause. Then silence, and there begins a charming hour of description, analysis, simile, anecdote, harmless pun, which clothes the dry bones with poetic imagery, enlivens a hard and fatiguing day with humor, and brightens to the tired listener the details for difficult though interesting study."

We can see that Holmes had a quality of personal aliveness and that he was continuously responsive to the pull of human sympathy. We may well wish that we might be present for some one of his conversational sallies. But it is the nature of conversation to be evanescent. At the time we hear good talk the flow of wit and wisdom seems important, memorable, fascinating and we fondly believe that we shall never forget such phrasing, such images: but we do forget. We all have such experiences as that recorded by William Dean Howells: "I do not remember what else he talked of, though once I remembered it with what I believed an ineffaceable distinctness." That seemingly ineffaceable distinctness fades away, and only the warm glow of general pleasure and personal satisfaction remains. Conversations must in the nature of things deal in partial truths and exaggerated truths and various shadings, for the art of conversation serves the larger and greater art of human relations.

In early August, 1850, Holmes was a member of a literary group gathered under the hospitality of the Dudley D. Field family at Stockbridge. The day-long party included Hawthorne, Melville, Duyckinck, Cornelius Mathews, Sedgwick, James T. Fields and some wives or daughters. This collection of literary lions roamed up the side of Monument Mountain for a morning walk, dined on a three-hour-long dinner, went in late afternoon to visit the Icy Glen — and talked. It was a memorable enough occasion so that half a dozen different glimpses of the talk and fellowship have come down to us. Holmes' name is present throughout them all.

While on Monument Mountain a thunder cloud brought a shower and the party scattered for shelter. Holmes cut three branches for an umbrella. He pulled the corks from the champagne bottles. He "peeped about the cliffs and protested it affected him like ipecac." But out on a mountain side is not the place for conversation to shine. In the warmth of the Field home and at the dinner "Dr. Holmes said some of his best things and *drew the whole company out* by laying down various propositions of the superiority of the Englishmen. Melville attacked him vigorously. Hawthorne looked on and Fields his publisher smiled with internal satisfaction underneath his curled whiskers . . ." The description is by Evert A. Duyckinck in a letter to his wife. The italics are added to indicate that, though Holmes took a central place of importance in the conversation, it was not to monopolize, but to further the group participation.

Holmes had "a sweet and caressing irony"

which he would use on the unwary. When he was in conversation with the young Howells, Howells wrote, "It was chiefly his talk, but I have always found the best talkers are willing that you should talk if you like, and a quick sympathy and a subtle sense met all that I had to say from him . . ."

Howells went on a kind of pilgrimage to Boston to meet the literary great at that hub of American culture, as Holmes called it, and he was fortunate in being present for a memorable conversation. Howells was ready for the event and capable of assessing it. "Nothing else so richly satisfactory, indeed," he wrote, "as the whole affair could have happened to a like youth at such a point in his career; and when I sat down with Dr. Holmes and Mr. Fields, on Lowell's right, I felt through and through the dramatic perfection of the event."

Howells himself was mostly silent while Holmes and Lowell rolled the ball back and forth between them, though Fields entered embellishments of his own kind, delightful stories, sketches of character, even of caricature, mostly literary, for Fields "was both a lover and publisher of books."

"It was such talk as I had, of course, never heard before, and it is not saying enough to say that I have never heard such talk since except from these two men. It was as light and kind as it was deep and true, and it ranged over a hundred things, with a perpetual sparkle of Dr. Holmes' wit, and a constant glow of Lowell's incandescent sense."

If we can think of Holmes as the leader here we can imagine his conversation, partly, from the Autocrat. It was highly civilized conversation. Holmes was scientific, deeply interested in literature and the imaginative. Under his cultivation the seeds of factual knowledge grew up into thought and flowered in understanding. The exchanges were ablaze with metaphor, not used merely as display, but as intellectual and imaginative children of fancy, born to delight and enlighten and clarify and extend the familiar toward the unknown reaches of man's desire. Holmes knew that the alert wit expressing itself richly kept bringing to light new fancy and new concepts. "There is a Delphi and a Pythoness in every human breast," he said. His style of speech had "the smack of cider, the tonic of climate," wrote someone in the *Boston Advertiser* of his day. Under his lively spirit, in sympathetic concord with Lowell's the conversation became "an exchange of thoughts and fancies."

Holmes, in his life and his achievement, illustrated how the gentle and delicate art of conversation may be cultivated by a man who has a varied interest, a warm-hearted touch with humanity, and a passion for talk.



# LEAVE IT TO YALE

by Edwin R. Schoell

*Dr. Schoell (Ph. D., Denver) is Assistant Professor of Speech at the Santa Barbara College of the University of California. He is author of many articles on the theatre.*

I TAKE A DIM VIEW OF THE FUTURE of new plays for the non-commercial theatre. I have received literally bales of manuscripts and without exception, the new plays I have read fall into one of two categories. First, the play that has obviously made the rounds of every commercial producer in the Western Hemisphere and that is now being unloaded on the boobs in the non-professional theatre in the hope of making at least a nickel rather than the hoped-for millions; second, the play of high quality that is tied up by trusts, estates, or options pending the possibility of commercial production. The first we wouldn't do. The second we can't. But I shall continue to read — and to hope — and just perhaps some day a saint with a good script will come along and say, 'I am not dazzled by Broadway. I don't want to make money out of it. It's all yours on a \$50 - \$25 basis'."

This statement by Paul Bruce Pettit, director of the College Theatre at New York State College for Teachers in Albany, is a cryptic summary of one dilemma that faces the college director who genuinely feels that the educational theatre has a more vital role in the world of the drama than to serve as a museum for the classics or as Broadway's used-play outlet.

A survey of new play production in the educational theatres of the nation recently conducted by the author brought forth a number of interesting and revealing comments from Eastern college theatre directors regarding their attitudes toward the new dramatist and their feelings about producing his work.

First of all, the East<sup>1</sup> presents a fairly united front in accepting that new play production is one important function of the academic theatre. Terrell Everett, director of dramatics at the University of Buffalo, points out the educational theatre's responsibility to the American people. "That responsibility is training, experimenting, presenting theatre art to its audience. Not only the art of design, direction, acting, but also the art of playwriting. Too few groups in the educational theatre have accepted this responsibility."

<sup>1</sup> Defined as the New England States, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Dr. Raymond Gasper, associate director of the Queens College Theatre is more emphatic. "The college theatre that fails to encourage the writing of new plays and fails to consider production of worthwhile original plays has little or no claim as a contributing force in the theatre."

These points of view reflect the general attitude toward new play responsibility that exists in Eastern theatre schools. Statistically speaking, of fifty-five Eastern college directors contacted for opinions on this point, only one believed that the production of untested plays is beyond the scope and purpose of the educational theatre. Eight others felt neither pro nor con, but of these eight, four stated that a meritorious new work would be considered on the same basis as any proven script. The remaining forty-six directors all expressed positive feelings ranging from mild endorsement to strong concern that the educational theatre functions in this sphere in too limited a fashion.

Recognition of responsibility, however, is not coincidental with active acceptance of it. "I am kept from participating," writes one director, "because the college is small and the drama program is limited." A second director reports that new play production is largely experimentation and usually beyond the capacity of the small theatre, where equipment, personnel, and money problems are acute. A number of other respondents emphasized the difficulties of the small department. Box office, actor proficiency, and limitations of facilities and time are the principal reasons for a hesitant attitude toward producing new plays.

Eastern college directors believe that the larger university with a subsidized theatre is the logical one for wholeheartedly embracing a new play program. Annetta Wood, chairman of the department of Drama at Rutgers University, following an experience of producing a new play (later tried out unsuccessfully in an Off-Broadway theatre) as a major production to a sparse audience affirms the belief that an endowed or subsidized educational theatre may find the production of new plays practical, but "for those of us who must pay our way, it is not. Better to continue in existence with name plays than to woo extinction by this method."

Similar points of view come from very many directors. Unable to secure top quality new scripts, the "typical" academic theatre dares not risk carrying out this function even though the director feels it belongs to it integrally. The existence of this condition is reflected in figures which show that the bulk of new play production in the East is left to a few atypical schools in the belief that these schools, uniquely equipped to meet the vigorous challenge of developing America's new play-writing talent, ought to carry the burden. The typical educational theatre in the East, as we shall see, thus favors a "leave it to Yale" philosophy of new play production.

A brief statistical summary shows that the Eastern college theatre director, while interested in the new dramatist and sympathetic toward his problem of finding outlets for his work, does not produce many new plays. Of fifty-five colleges, surveyed for the five year period between 1953 and 1958, less than half had any type of new play activity. The studio or workshop program, an excellent outlet for tryout of student or other novice writers, is quite limited in Eastern colleges and particularly in respect to new play production. Slightly more than 24% of the colleges studied reported new play production in studio type theatres. Only 12% of the colleges reported having both main stage and studio showcases for new plays. Major production of new plays, however, occurred more often. Thirty-three per cent had staged at least one new play as a major production during the five year period, but among these, only 18% averaged as much as one production every two years.

The educational theatre in the rest of the nation has not maintained a particularly ambitious program of fostering the original play, but the rest of the nation's production is in excess of the East's. A total of 287 college theatres in the nation were surveyed and in that part of the country outside of Eastern boundaries, 55% carry on a new play program. Both main stage and studio facilities are employed as new play showcases in 22% of the theatres. Thirty-eight per cent have active studio programs and main stage original play productions exist in 39% of these theatres. Only in this sphere, with 33% of its theatres participating, does the East begin to approach the national average.

Figures on new plays produced in the nation's college theatres for the 1956-57 and 1957-58 seasons show a total of 708 stagings, 111 of which were given in Eastern colleges. Averaging the productions by the number of theatres reporting for

each section, the East shows 2.0 productions per theatre while the rest of the nation averages 2.7. Percentage-wise, the East with 19% of the reporting theatres, mounted a little more than 13% of the productions. Somewhere in the neighborhood of one-half the total productions reported for the Eastern area were offered by seven schools with distinguished new play programs. Among these leaders the most prominent are Yale University's School of the Drama, Columbia University's Department of Dramatic Arts, and the Theatre Arts department of Pennsylvania State University. Considering the major contribution of these schools with extensive programs, it is evident that the great bulk of Eastern colleges maintain either a hands-off policy toward the new play or a policy of limited emphasis that occasions highly sporadic production.

It is interesting to note other regional practices in this respect. The West, like the East, is governed by the "leave it to Yale" philosophy. The chief difference between these two areas is that the West maintains a more vigorous total program, primarily because there are a greater number of big program contributors. The characteristic theatre school in the West also looks at the efforts of the fledgling dramatist with considerable skepticism. The new play program in the Central and Southern regions is more diffuse. Fewer schools have extensive programs, and particularly in the South, more schools participate. The South, as a result, has the most active and varied regional program in the nation.

Since the rest of the typical educational theatres in the country face like problems of budget, time, personnel, and actor proficiency, as well as physical problems involving the stage and equipment, the question arises why the East lags in new play productive effort. There appear to be three outstanding reasons for this phenomenon. The first rests in the underdeveloped nature of the phase of the program that takes place on experimental, workshop, studio, or tryout stages. This phase seems to be much more restricted in the Eastern colleges than it is in the other schools of the nation. In the East approximately the same number of theatre schools have workshop programs as in the other regions of the country, but fewer Eastern schools make use of workshop facilities for new play tryout. In the South, for example, 27% of the theatres with studio programs do not produce new plays. In the East 40% do not. More than half of the Eastern theatres that offer new plays in major production do not make use of studio facilities for additional work. We have seen that only 12% of

the theatres in the East have both major and studio new play programs, as compared with 22% in the rest of the nation. It would appear that a number of Eastern theatre directors who are interested in the manuscript play, but somewhat dubious of its quality, might develop a creditable new play program off the main stage. Such a tryout theatre could be highly beneficial to the students who otherwise get no chance to experience the problems associated with new play production.

In the second instance we find an association with academic training in playwriting. In the nation's theatre schools there is a direct relationship between the offering of playwriting and production of original plays. Among the Eastern colleges that offer playwriting 82% have some type of new play program. But playwriting is a course offering in about one of three theatre schools in the East while the ratio for the rest of the country is more than one to two. In this respect there is also an integral tie-in with the studio program. Among those Eastern colleges which neither offer playwriting nor conduct a workshop or experimental program, 94% never present a new play, and among the remainder new play productions are rare.

The third and probably most vital consideration has to do with attitude. Although Eastern college directors, on the whole, are cordial to the idea of encouraging unestablished writers, there is, at the same time, a feeling that only new plays of unqualified excellence deserve to be considered by the educational theatre. Applied kindly, this attitude has considerable merit. To produce an original script just because it is new, as one director tersely pointed out, is nonsensical. Production of a poor or mediocre work discredits both the institution and the author. Such an action is a service to no one. It is naive, however, to assume that fine ideas, proficiently developed and astutely written, are characteristically found in new works. An unknown quantity is always present. The educational theatre director must, of course, have the ability to screen plays of apparent promise from the trash. But if he is unwilling ever to work with a less-than-perfect vehicle, it is doubtful that he will contribute vitally to the development of the drama.

Administrative attitude may be added as a contributing factor to the lack of new play production, since many Eastern college directors are apparently hamstrung by administrative feeling that the college theatre should operate in the environment of professional competition. In many cases only so-called hit plays are condoned in the major production schedule. The original play, since it has an

off-beat earmark, is often frowned upon by box office conscious administrators.

A few other points of view that steer new play policy in Eastern colleges are worth mentioning briefly. There is some feeling that the college with a limited major production program — usually four or less a year — can ill afford to devote part of that program to original works. A director from New England pointed out that there are too many masterpieces of the drama to be staged to enable the educational theatre with a limited program to spend time with original plays. Another director from New York felt that every new play produced represented one classical play that was being denied to the student who sees all too few classics in his lifetime. Another director facetiously stated his realistic philosophy. "We do two classics and two Broadway hits a year. The popular plays sustain our subscription series. Our audiences put up with Euripides in order to see F. Hugh Herbert. Subscription tickets, you see, cost no more than individual admissions to two plays. Thus we sneak in culture via the back door."

A number of directors feel that new plays that cannot attract professional consideration are automatically unworthy of consideration by the educational theatre. Commenting on this point of view, one needs only to recall that had not "Dark of the Moon" been first tried out at Catholic University and awarded a prize by Stanford University's Dramatists Alliance, it likely would never have achieved professional status. "Inherit the Wind," by the same token, had been rejected by Broadway as an unpredictable vehicle until Margo Jones dared to produce it in her Dallas theatre.

What has been shown so far is the skeptical, hesitant, and sometimes aloof attitude toward production of new plays that exists in the national educational theatre and is prevalent in the East. The nation's playwrights, however, must bear a portion of the blame for the failure of the educational theatre to offer them more than a token helping hand. Until such time that the playwright himself begins to look upon the educational theatre as something other than a last resort for production, there can be little hope for much change in the typical educational theatre director's attitude.

To decry the harried Eastern college director because he is reluctant to fully embrace an ambitious new play program, or because his program does not compare with the rest of the nation in extent of activity would be unjust. Many Eastern institutions find it difficult because of limitations of staff, physical plant, finances, and other prob-



lems to sustain other than "popular" production programs. But more of these departments must seek the means to develop theatre programs with something more than the traditional emphases, if the potentiality of the educational theatre to become a more vital force in the American scene is to be realized.

Educational theatre directors are among the most vocal in lamenting the state of the American theatre. If we continue to look only to Broadway and the classics for our plays, there is little hope that the educational theatre will ever do much of a job of contributing new life to the drama. Surely we accept that good new plays come from Broadway every year. But the professional theatre, narrowly confined at the source to a handful of theatres and at the same time fearful to move beyond the limitations of popular dictates and fancies, is hardly able to do a lone job of revitalizing the drama in America. This is a task to be shared by the hundreds and thousands of educational and community theatres in the nation, with the educational theatres — it is to be hoped — leading the way.

The seeds of a really significant new drama program are present in the East. There is a smell of interest, a sense of willingness in the atmosphere. What is lacking at the moment is the spirit to pioneer, to search out good new scripts, and not

give up when a masterpiece of contemporary drama fails to arrive in the first mail or come out of next year's play-writing seminar. As an easy answer to the problem, the past trend in the East — and to a large extent in the rest of the nation — has been to "leave it to Yale" and the other schools particularly equipped to perform in an outstanding fashion. But outstanding performance by a few schools and a handful of ambitious directors will not solve the problem.

The hope for a significant American drama of the future rests not with the educational theatre director who plans to do something next year, or maybe the year after, or who sits in anticipation of producing a new play if and when a literary masterpiece happens across his desk. It rests with the directors who, like Paul Pettit, search and are disappointed and continue to search. It rests with those who sell to the college administrator and to the public something a little more daring than a season of classics or Broadway rummage. It rests with those who are willing to produce something less than great in the hope that the author's great play, still locked within him, will be released by the key of preliminary production. In the hands of people like these the educational theatre is true to its purpose. In the hands of people like these it is a moving force in the American theatre.

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# ACTING

by Marjorie L. Dycke

Panel on ACTING. Leader: H. Barrett Davis, Lehigh University, Resource Persons: Bernard Beckerman, Hofstra College; Herschel L. Bricker, U. of Maine; Marjorie L. Dycke, H. S. of Performing Arts, N.Y.C.; Louis Hetler, State Univ. Teachers College, Brockport, N. Y.

Basic Question: *What is acting? Can it be taught?*  
Sub-question: *Is ability to act an inherited gift or may it be acquired through the cultivation of a technique?*

Have you ever pretended to be interested when bored, indifferent when your feelings have been hurt, hospitable when unwelcome guests appear? We are all born actors, but not all of us are good at it. We can be taught to be better actors, but only to the extent of our talent, interest and drive for improvement.

When Webster is approached for his definition, we find that he hedges. He says: "Acting is the *art* or *practice* of impersonating on the stage." He thus joins the Old Vic with the Amateur Hour. Now, the *practice* of acting can be cultivated, more or less well, by anyone, Q.E.D., everyday; the *craft* of acting can be learned by the moderately talented. These two comprise the *technique* of acting which *can* be taught. The *art* of acting can be achieved only by the unusually talented — and talent *cannot* be taught: either you have it or you haven't. (Anyone with enough fingers can do arithmetic but not everyone can be Einstein.)

A big problem in speaking about acting is posed by the standard of the marketplace: it sells, but is it art? Sometimes it is.

There is the performer whose own personality is so intriguing that the audience wants to see So-and-So, not the play. She may be capable of doing more, but the audience demands her in the familiar form. This is the "star." In the same category is the actor who has created such an appealing character that the audience wants no more from him than that — and will accept no more: e.g., Charlie Chaplin's Tramp. He is "type-cast," as is the actor who is capable of playing nothing more than himself but can do that well: Gary Cooper. Little or nothing has been done by acting schools for these poor souls, frequently rich. They can honestly say: "I never had a lesson in my life

and look at me now." Look at Marilyn Monroe, poor girl. The biggest joke among her "fans" is that she is studying at the Actors' Studio and that she wanted to play in *The Brothers Karamazov*. These are actors.

The actor most frequently encountered, both in acting schools and in the profession, is the one destined for minor roles and sometimes featured billing or even overnight stardom and sudden oblivion. He may be a potentially great talent who has never studied, even while attending acting school, and who is satisfied to take whatever comes along as long as it comes easily. Or, he may be a hard-working soul who is striving to make the most of what limited gifts he has and is grateful for the opportunity to use them. These, too, are actors.

Finally, there is the infrequent answer to the acting teacher's prayer: the artist in whom are combined great talent and strong drive for its development. He stretches himself for a variety of roles. He delights in not being recognized in the parts he plays because he has become so completely the instrument of the part. He sometimes starves and sometimes becomes rich. He would have been an actor no matter where he had gone. His instinct would have kept him searching until he had found the right place for him, even though it might have taken years. To this actor, the theatre is a way of life, a temple to which he dedicates his highest service, whether it pays off or not.

Under these circumstances, by what acid test shall we be judged when we claim that we teach acting and that we produce actors? Only the *cognoscenti* — those "in the know" behind the scenes — can tell if the learning process has been a sound one and if the actor is using his talent in the most artistically productive way. The public (and I

include Boards of Education, Trustees, and Boards of Directors) judge only by the school's list of employed graduates and former students, alas. What some of these students have to say about the schools may be most uncomplimentary. What the schools privately say about some of those on the list is equally bad. We all have our lists because we have to exist in a businessman's world.

But Show Business or no business, to my mind, the acting school must be set up for the artist, serving the others, but feathering the nest for *him*. It must put its premium on stimulating creativity and on instilling a desire to serve the art. The commercial studio, encouraging exhibitionism and teaching quick-success gimmicks and tricks-of-the-trade, will always be with us, trailing its inevitable list of "successful graduates and former students." Everlasting shame to the educational theatre which thus catches "the nearest way." We must train for a theatre better than the one we have. Our graduates should be able to render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, but they should feel impelled, under our guidance, to complete the quotation.

Sub-question 2. *Is "the method" suited to the American approach to the theatre?*

The only apt reply to this question is another question: "Can Freudian techniques be used outside of Vienna?" Not only is "the method" suited: it pays off in cold American cash. Ask Harold Clurman, Elia Kazan, Robert Lewis, Joshua Logan, Bretaigne Windust, Saint Subber, Joseph Anthony, Sidney Lumet, Marlon Brando, Eli Wallach, etc., etc. Creative Dramatics, born of Stanislavski and clutched to the American bosom, is simply a rosebud by another name. At Performing Arts, we use the Stanislavski Method. What is it?

It is a way of training the actor's internal instrument, the creative mechanism which alone gives meaning to the otherwise empty posturing and vocalizing which some are content to call acting. This training of the inner self — what Stanislavski called "psycho-technique" — does not take the place of training in externals, as Stanislavski himself emphasized, but it is the only part of the training program which can be called acting. The full program should include intensive work on body in a separate but correlated course, on voice similarly, on diction, on makeup, on costume, and, in first place, on acting. To quote Stanislavski (*An Actor Prepares*, p. 15): "In order to express a most delicate and largely subconscious life it is necessary to have control of an unusually responsive, excellently prepared vocal and physical apparatus. . . .

That is why an actor of our type is obliged to work so much more than others, both on his inner equipment, which creates the life of the part, and also on his outer physical apparatus, which should reproduce the results of the creative work of his emotions with precision."

The training in acting is two-fold: it involves the actor's work on himself (for concentration, sensibility, observation, imagination, sense memory, emotional recall, selectivity, theatrical truth, characterization) and the actor's work on the play (play analysis, formal and informal research, subtext, interpretation, adaptation of self to the role: physically, vocally, inwardly; and, working with a director). The work on acting must be separate and apart from work on the other, subsidiary techniques. All techniques coalesce in the finished product if the training has been satisfactorily accomplished. The fact that there is always more to learn keeps an actor studying for the rest of his artistic life. From all the study and from experience in performing, each actor finds his own way or, as Stanislavski put it, he finds the key which he alone can discover, the key to the golden box of his unconscious life from which all inspiration comes. The teacher can only direct him in his search, can expose him to as many sources of creative stimulation as possible. The actor learns by his experiences what works for him. The result is his individual technique. Actors are not mass-produced. They are custom-built.

Sub-question 3. *Upon what psychological principles are the present theories of acting based?*

The Stanislavski Method is based on Sigmund Freud's theories of the unconscious. Again quoting Stanislavski: (*An Actor Prepares*, pp. 13, 14): ". . . we are supposed to create under inspiration; only our subconscious gives us inspiration; yet we apparently can use our subconscious only through our consciousness which kills it.

"Fortunately there is a way out. We find the solution in an oblique instead of a direct approach. In the soul of a human being there are certain elements which are subject to consciousness and will. These accessible parts are capable in turn of acting on psychic processes that are involuntary.

". . . We must leave all that is in the fullest sense subconscious to nature, and address ourselves to what is within our reach. When the subconscious, when intuition, enters into our work we must know how not to interfere.

"One cannot always create subconsciously and with inspiration. No such genius exists in the world. Therefore our art teaches us first of all to create



consciously and rightly, because that will best prepare the way for the blossoming of the subconscious, which is inspiration. The more you have of conscious creative moments in your role the more chance you will have of a flow of inspiration."

Sub-question 4. *What are the most effective procedures for insuring guidance in acting throughout a student's college career?*

The best insurance of guidance is a well-planned, integrated series of courses given by qualified teachers working closely with each other, courses in which theory is taught through practice accompanied by constructive critical suggestion. The atmosphere in the acting classes should be

informal, with the freedom that only interest and self-discipline can provide, in order to encourage creativity. There should also be a policy of student-selection so that the competent are not handicapped in their development by the star-gazers. When the student is ready for performance, not as a director's puppet but as a contributing creator, he should have the opportunity to learn from audience reactions through participation in a public production running a week or more. The ideal situation would then continue into repertory playing with a chance at widely varying roles. Second-best would provide Actors' Studio-type of continued training until the next performance came along.

I rest my case.

# Speech in The Undergraduate Public Relations Curriculum

by Raymond Simon

Mr. Simon is Assistant Professor of Public Relations, Utica College of Syracuse University, Utica, N. Y.

ONE OF MY PUBLIC RELATIONS FRIENDS once told me that the pattern for making a speech is really very simple. Tell a joke, then say something important, and then cite an example. Tell another joke, say something important, and then cite another example. And so on until 20 or 30 minutes have passed.

That's what my public relations friend said about making a speech, and I guess that proves to you it's true what you've always thought about public relations men.

Unfortunately, I'll have to skip the first part of my friend's advice because the only joke I know is the fact that I — about the poorest public speaker in the United States — am here to address members of the Speech Association of the Eastern States. On the grounds it may tend to incriminate me, I refuse to tell upon whom the joke is.

I'm very happy, however, to give you my ideas about the place of speech in the undergraduate public relations curriculum. Believe me, this is no joke but a very serious matter, and I hope I can do it some small justice.

I think it's probably wise to start out by observing that we are dealing here with a relatively recent phenomenon on the American scene, both education and profession-wise. Unlike the teaching of speech, the teaching of public relations is a newcomer to education. So is the public relations profession, though it has been with us much longer than the academic side.

We need go back only about 17 short years to prove my point. If you were to look through the listings of "Public Relations Counselors" in the 1940 New York City phone book you would have seen but a score of such men listed. Today's directory reveals several hundred, with the list growing each year.

The history of the two main public relations groups — the Public Relations Society of America and the American Public Relations Association — is so recent we need go back only ten years. In fact, this past year saw the 10th anniversary of this professional society, whose membership is now nearing the 3,000 mark.

And the same applies to the teaching of public

relations. Prior to the war, only a few schools were offering any sort of public relations work. There were one or two schools in metropolitan centers attempting some sort of career training, but these were isolated cases. In general, public relations was not considered as a full-fledged academic brother, but as a kind of distant cousin whose existence the regular members of the university family sort of just tolerated.

In many universities today this "toleration" still exists, but the evidence is clear that the teaching of public relations is increasing and gaining acceptance in a recognized manner. Last year, according to a study made by the National Education Committee of the PRSA, some form of public relations education was offered in 136 colleges and universities. Fourteen institutions, including my own, offer a degree in the field; 28 other institutions offer a sequence. Many of the 136 schools provide just one or two courses in the subject area, but there is at least one school of Public Relations.

I cite these facts to underscore one major point: when we talk of the place of Speech in the undergraduate public relations curriculum we must remember that we are dealing not with hardened academic arteries but with young and mobile ducts. There is no arrangement of courses considered ideal; there is much questioning, probing, and searching; there is certainly plenty of room for improvement.

Though I'm not one of those who feel that public relations teaching ought to be centered in departments of journalism, I do recognize the fact of life that says a good many of the public relations degrees and sequences are found in the journalism departments and schools. And I recognize, too, that there are certain areas of agreement about journalistic and public relations education today. It is fairly well agreed that such majors should take about three-quarters of their school work in the liberal-arts, humanities area; that is, three quarters of the curriculum should be in non-journalistic subjects. It is fairly well agreed, too, that the *required* subjects in journalism and allied fields should center mainly on writing techniques and abilities.

I think you can recognize the ultimate meaning of these areas of agreement. Speech, when offered, is usually not offered as a required subject, but as either an elective or a core-related subject.

Mind you, I don't feel that this is the way the undergraduate public relations curriculum should be, but what it is today. My personal feeling is that Speech holds an extremely important

place in any future public relations man's make-up. My feeling is that at least one, probably two to three Speech courses ought to be required.

The problem, of course, is how to fit in such requirements with other equally important requirements of public relations and journalism, and still end up with the desired ration of one-quarter of required PR courses and three-quarters of elective, liberal arts, humanities courses. Certainly, a good public relations man must know about news writing, reporting, publicity, principles of public relations, public opinion, graphic arts, radio and television, magazine writing, and so on.

As an end result, when we add up these required journalism and public relations courses, we find there is very little room for Speech in the required area, unless we are either willing to toss out some PR courses or else change our ratio. And because most colleges offering public relations and journalism aren't willing to change their ratio of required and elective courses, we thus find Speech in either the core-related or elective areas.

I said earlier that I feel at least one, probably two to three Speech courses ought to be required, and I'd like to explain why. About the easiest way I can think of is to look at today's public relations man and see just where Speech is important to him.

Public relations literature, by public relations men, is a rich lode of golden nuggets of advice to would-be practitioners. There is no hesitancy about recommending that a public relations man must be a specialist in mass media, in understanding public opinion, in having wisdom, foresight, and maturity. Mining the gold from this panload of pebbles is a difficult task but so far as Speech teachers are concerned I think we can discern two solid areas of further discussion today.

Persuasion, I feel, is an all-important word to the would-be public relations man. This ability to persuade has two equally important facets: the verbal ability and the written ability; and I refer to written not in terms of news stories and publicity releases but in terms of speech writing.

In such terms, we find public relations men depending on Speech either directly or indirectly. *Directly* the public relations man makes speeches so as to develop in the public a better understanding of the field itself or a better understanding of the firm or organization he represents.

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major city in the United States a public relations man is delivering a talk on "Ways to Communicate More Efficiently" or "Public Relations: What is it" or "The Future of Public Relations."

I can think of no better example of this point than the president of the Public Relations Society of America, Mr. Ken Haagensen, of Allis-Chalmers Manufacturing Company. Here, for example is his schedule of speeches for February and March: 6 major speeches in February and 6 in March.

Through such talks and speeches leaders of public relations are actually "speaking up" for public relations.

But a good public relations man must know how to "speak up" in another area. I know of no high-level public relations director or manager who doesn't find himself relying strongly on Speech to create a better understanding of both his department and of the firm and organization he represents. Internally, within his organization, the public relations director finds himself relying on his verbal abilities to sell to other top management people the concept of public relations, and to sell public relations ideas for the firm to follow.

Here's what one top-notch public relations manager told me: "Sure, I have to know how to write, but more important, I have to know how to speak up, clearly, succinctly, and with persuasion. The power of Speech is indeed most vital and important."

This man, who heads up a 20-man department, points out also that he often finds himself spokesman for his company in dealing with such publics as consumers, stockholders, dealers, and the public at large. And, of course, very important to any organization are press, radio, television, magazine, and the other PR media. Here the public relations man finds himself delivering not set, formal talks, but informal briefings. In short, he must be able to handle himself with ease and fluency and to think quickly on his feet.

These, as you can see, are direct ways in which Speech is used by the public relations man himself in his everyday work. *Indirectly*, such a man uses Speech in another way, for he is often the one to whom top management turns when it comes to writing and preparing speeches for others. I'm sure most of us here realize that presidents of firms usually don't write their own speeches but rely on others to handle this job. "Others" in most cases turn out to be public relations directors and personnel.



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### Write to

Dr. Robert T. Oliver, Head  
Department of Speech  
University Park, Pennsylvania

Writing speeches may come naturally to some people, but you can count these to be in the minority. One should learn how to write speeches while in college by taking courses in speech writing; thereby, the Speech Department plays another important part in the training of public relations people.

Thus, both directly and indirectly, Speech plays a vital role in public relations activity, and it should play a similar vital role in training for public relations work. At Utica College all public relations majors are required to take the basic public speaking course, and they're urged to take at least one complete year. As we put no brakes, so to speak, on electives, we find many of our people majoring in public relations and minoring in Speech. Here, it seems to me, is an ideal arrangement. I can't speak for the other schools offering majors in PR, but speaking for myself I'd cite such an arrangement as a particularly appropriate one for any young man hoping to make his way in public relations after graduation.

To sum up, if I had a choice of Speech courses I'd want public relations majors to take, either as required, core-related, or elective courses, I would select the following:

One, a course in the improvement of voice and diction, because no public relations man can afford to handle the language ineffectively. Two, a basic course in public speaking, because a public relations man must deliver many talks in public. Three, a course in persuasion, because a public relations man must know how to persuade others that his organization and its products are deserving of trust and confidence. Four, a course in interpretation, because a public relations man must be able to analyze and interpret complex material and documents. And five, a course in speech writing, because one of the main tasks of a public relations man is to write speeches for others to deliver.

In closing, I'd like to cite the testimony of one of our graduates who took an equal amount of Speech and public relations courses. Says this graduate, who now holds an important public relations post with one of America's largest airlines: "When I think back to my undergraduate days, I have a hard time figuring out which is more important to me in my job today, the Speech or the public relations courses. I guess I'll have to settle for both and say they played an equal part."

That graduate, I might say, is one of our panelists here today: Robert Crimley of American Airlines. He looks successful enough to serve as proof of the pudding, so on Bob Crimley I'll rest my case.

# Customer Relations Start

## Inside the Organization

by Harold P. Zelko

*Mr. Zelko, Professor of Speech at the Pennsylvania State University, delivered this as a talk to the Pennsylvania Electric Association Customer Relations Conference, Hershey, Pennsylvania, on May 7, 1958.*

I have enjoyed very much having the opportunity to be with you during your entire conference today and to listen to the excellent remarks of preceding speakers on this vital subject of customer relations. It is a sort of "busman's holiday" for a Speech professor to spend this much time listening, but I assure you that it has been very rewarding. I have had the pleasure of working with many of you men in this group in some of your own company training objectives, and I am happy to have this opportunity to greet you again today and to renew our very fine relations of the past. In this connection, I bring you greetings from a colleague, Dr. Harold J. O'Brien, who, as you well remember, filled this same speaking spot last year and has similarly worked with several of your companies. Many of you know that "Pat" and I did a book\* together recently which has a very important bearing on our subject today.

I do not find it an easy task to follow in his footsteps and the more immediate footsteps of today's fine speakers. I say this primarily because of the high quality of their speaking as well as the lateness of the hour and my position as the last speaker on your program. But I say it also because each of you could well raise the question at this point: What else is there left to say on the subject of customer relations? And we may have to ponder considerably for a satisfactory answer. Your speakers have emphasized the importance of customer relations to your industry and its future, the types and methods of conveying information to the public about the company, the effect of collection policies on good relations, and some of the problems of government policy and its effect on your industry. Most of this discussion has dealt with the *external* relations of the company or its employees with the customer, and this is rightly what most of us think of as customer relations. But let's turn our direction the other way for a few

minutes and look at what goes on *inside* the organization and its possible effect on customer or public relations.

### A DEFINITION

There may be no completely satisfactory definition of customer relations, and surely many persons more expert than I have attempted to define what it is. One of the real problems in this respect is that we are dealing with a number of intangibles, mostly involving *people*, and as soon as you get into any subject that involves the relationships between people you're in trouble when you try to reduce these to simple definitions. But let's make an attempt like this:

Customer relations is the point of contact between a customer (or member of the public) and the "company," or an employee of the company. *Good* customer relations is the best possible execution of this contact to the mutual satisfaction of both the customer and the company.

In a service industry such as yours, maintaining these relations in a constant, steady flow is the heart of your objective. Every one of you in this room knows this and can probably execute this relationship in a perfectly satisfactory manner when you have occasion to do so. Customer relations is your business. But we know that it is impossible for higher levels of management or expert staff officials in an organization to execute all the contacts with the public themselves. If you could, you'd have no problem. You have long since recognized that the "company" is not you, not the president or some few high officials who recognize this kind of responsibility, and not some intangible and impersonal entity. The "company" is the *people* who work for it, *every last one of them*, and it is they whom the customer gets to see and know and think of as the company.

Now since you can't discharge all the company's customer relations responsibilities and functions

\* *Management-Employee Communication in Action*, Howard Allen, Inc., Cleveland, 1957.

yourself, what you would like to see ideally would be to have every employee discharge them exactly as you would do yourself if you could. In other words, the employee becomes your *alter ego*, your exact counterpart, and the closer he comes to representing you in the high quality of your own level of evaluation of this responsibility, the more satisfied you will be with his performance. Obviously this means that a major part of your good customer relations objective must be the consideration of the present level of such performance by your employees, why it isn't better, and what can be done to improve it. This means that every salesman, every counter clerk, every meter reader, every letter writer, and every speaker who represents your company is of primary concern to your total objective of improved customer relations. There is no question but that *every employee is a public relations ambassador for the company* in some form or other.

I would like to try to answer three questions in an attempt to come to some conclusions on what we can do to raise the level of employee competence as a public relations ambassador: Where does customer relations really start? What are the factors affecting an employee's customer contacts? What kind of action program should you be working toward to bring about best results?

#### WHERE DOES CUSTOMER RELATIONS REALLY START?

*Customer relations starts with the health and climate inside the organization itself.* One of the biggest fallacies of those who would think they are promoting customer relations by certain external programs and mediums is to assume that this starts at the outside fringe of the company. It is traditional that we have well-appointed public relations offices, attractive company handbooks, newsletters, financial reports, advertisements, newspaper releases, and other printed materials that we feel represent the company well to the public. I do not intend to deprecate the value of such programs and materials. But the danger is to overestimate their value and to regard them as the complete "customer relations program" of the company. This could be like putting a shiny new finish on an old car that has a worn-out battery, a stripped gear in the transmission, and other *internal* breakdowns which are bound to keep it from running efficiently. The shiny surface may fool some, but it cannot for long hide the wrongs inside.

Every employee has a relationship with others in the company that shapes his attitudes and actions, and the central responsibility for this relationship is the supervisor. Let's look at a few pos-

sible situations. A counter clerk has just been "bawled out" by an angry supervisor who did not get the facts and wrongly accused the clerk of doing something which she actually did not do. A few minutes later a customer appears at the counter with a "complaint" about her bill. The clerk handles the customer curtly and abruptly, obviously not trying to be pleasant in the situation. A salesman has just completed an order for a product, walks into the office and finds that a few days ago the product specifications were changed. He suddenly realizes that his new customer would not have placed the order under the new specifications without an explanation. A meter reader who is acquainted with the customers on his route and likes the area learns by the grapevine that he will be transferred to a new route. Actually this is just a rumor, but he is very unpleasant to people until he learns the truth.

Our first inclination is to accuse the counter clerk, the salesman, and the meter reader of practicing poor customer relations, and it is true that they did. But whose fault was it in each case? The answer is obviously the supervisor and the attitudes that were wrongly developed in the employees.

In the last few years we have become well aware of the fact that employees respond as people, which they are, and not as mechanical cogs in a machine, which they are not. Every relationship an employee has with a member of the public is tied to one or more relationships behind him and *within* the organizational structure. Here are some external relationships as they appear on the surface:

- Letter . . .* The company president writes a letter to a customer.
- Speech . . .* The plant superintendent makes a speech to a local civic club.
- Inspect . . .* The safety engineer makes a house inspection.
- Collects . . .* A clerk receives payment for a bill from a customer.

These may look like isolated transactions, each dependent solely on the person who executed them. But each is affected by the total *climate* and the *feeling of belonging to a work group* which the employee has at the time he performs the seemingly external act. The development of such a climate and feeling, so that one constantly feels "good" about working for *his* company is the responsibility of all levels of supervision, starting with the very top and including the first-line supervisor who is probably the most important cog in the whole network. And there is a great deal of difference in



an employee who refers to where he works as *the* company or *our* company. You can't expect him to do the latter by just an occasional "shot-in-the-arm" message or deed either; it requires continuous effort on the part of management to develop a team spirit and the kinds of attitudes in employees that will produce good customer relations.

When we put together the above examples of customer relations and see the relationships within the company that affect each one, we readily see how the network of company organization and interaction brings all employees together. Whether they really feel that they are together will depend on the extent to which company management practices the kinds of human considerations we will now discuss.

#### WHAT ARE THE FACTORS AFFECTING AN EMPLOYEE'S CUSTOMER CONTACTS?

We start with the premise that happy, satisfied employees who feel good about being members of a social work group will have the right kinds of attitudes and feelings that will motivate them to have pleasant relations with everyone they contact. The real answer to this question is what we as managers need to do to develop these objectives. We can attempt to make a list of factors that employees want if they are to have the right kinds of attitudes:

1. Employees want to be treated as *people*.
2. People want to be *informed*.
3. People want to be *recognized*.
4. People want to have opportunities to *participate*.
5. People want to feel as though they *belong*.

Ever since the famous Western Electric Hawthorne Plant studies which showed the effect of employee recognition on production and morale, we have been proving through actual experience and research the value of regarding employees as *people*. A combination of factors in our society in general have caused the emergence of the individual and the importance of the social climate in our industrial society as well. All of us are closer to each other in the total world picture, we are becoming inevitably related to each other, we are more concerned about happenings everywhere in the world, we are therefore much more informed and inter-related as a people. We have brought this philosophy of living into the work scene, each with his own desire for knowing what is going on and for pleasant relations with each other.

*If we add up all of the factors we have just listed and what we have said to this point, we see that practically every objective we are striving for*

*is accomplished through communication. All human relations depend on communication. Actually there is no other way one interacts with another in the work scene except through communication . . . or the lack of it.*

\**Keeping people informed* of what is going on means communication *downward*. To do this, we have to start at the top of the organization and insure that necessary company plans, policies, regulations, and any other details are "passed along the line" through all levels of management to the employee at the counter who meets the customer. We have to use every available channel and the best possible methods in doing this. If a memorandum or bulletin board announcement does it clearly, maybe this is enough. But it usually is not. Most matters are best explained orally, in face-to-face contact with the person on the receiving end. Perhaps the written communication will establish uniformity and permanence of record, but it must be supplemented with oral explanation and the *opportunity to ask questions*. This brings the method of conferences and meetings, at all levels, to the forefront, as well as informal personal contacts and interviews.

\**The recognition of employees as people* and giving them *opportunities to participate* means both downward communication and *upward* communication as well. To do this, management must first realize that employees at any level of work represent a reservoir of knowledge, experience, and ability that can be of great value to higher levels of management. This reservoir must be tapped and constantly drawn upon, not only to give people a feeling that they are recognized and are asked to participate in decisions, but because they can actually help management solve problems and make decisions. The principle of "consultative management" means that every supervisor, at all levels, will consult with his subordinates and draw on them to help in this way whenever it is appropriate. The International Business Machine Corporation spent months developing this principle and giving all supervisors an opportunity to express themselves and has carried this policy down to the work level. The Hormel Company, along with many others, sponsors this philosophy of management from the top down and puts it into effect through meetings, conferences, committees, and informal contacts which are encouraged throughout the organization. Companies like General Electric, Johnson & Johnson, Progress Manufacturing Company, Weirton Steel Company, and countless others are pioneering in this direction.

\*To develop a feeling of belonging which is so important to high morale and all the objectives of customer relations we are striving for, we must practice all these principles on a day-to-day basis. Even communication downward and upward is not enough. There must be an open and *permissive atmosphere* that permeates the organization and all the people in it which would include the flow of communication *across* and throughout the employee group. Now matter at what level a man works, he should freely pass on needed information, whether it be downward, upward, or across to an associate on the same level. Likewise, he should freely *listen* to those who would talk to him, encouraging his subordinates to express themselves by asking them their opinions, finding out their problems, and being sympathetic and sensitive to all they have to say. In accomplishing this feeling of belonging, it is well to remember that when individuals are asked to participate in making a policy or decision which they then will carry out, they will do it eagerly and with a *spirit of teamwork* that can never be accomplished when they are "ordered" to do it from above.

#### NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

Obviously, since so much of the accomplishment of these kinds of objectives depends on communication, it is essential that all levels of management understand the communication process and the barriers that interfere. To begin with, we must realize that communication is not a one-way street in which the sender is necessarily the most important part. We make the mistake of using words, in defining communication, that imply this when we say that "communication is the *transmitting* (*sending, conveying, telling, etc.*) of ideas from one person to another." There is always a reaction and response from the other person that we must consider if we are to have good communication, so that we should substitute a word like *exchange* for *transmitting*, in order to have our definition indicate the *two-way* nature of the process. Even more than this, we realize that successful communication involves a dynamic *circular* process, with the exchange flowing back and forth between sender and receiver. Again looking at our definition, we must add more words to indicate that we exchange more than just "ideas." We exchange our *feelings, attitudes, and moods* as well.

An understanding and resolving of the barriers to effective communication requires basically that we try to put ourselves in the position of the other person as much as possible at all times. Actually most barriers exist because of the very basic fact

that people are different in both organizational position and individual make-up. In the work situation, the *status* barrier usually exists, one being on a higher (or lower) level than the other. Then there are differences in *experiences, prejudices, and feelings*. Add to these the tendency for people to *resist change* and to want to *argue rather than understand*. Many of these barriers grow out of the fact that we are all *self-centered* whereas we should be "you"-centered, or listener-centered, when we are speaking. As a result of all these, we use *language* that the other person does not understand or interpret as we do.

It is not difficult to understand why communication breaks down and the consequent responsibility we have to minimize the barriers. One also realizes that if he accomplishes good communication with his employees and approaches his contacts with them in a sympathetic and pleasant manner and an indication of consideration for their position, they will in turn be likely to practice this in their relations with customers.

#### WHAT KIND OF ACTION PROGRAM SHOULD WE HAVE?

Let us restate our basic objective: *to improve customer relations.*

Here are the steps we should take:

1. First recognize that customer relations is not a mere external, fringe activity. It starts at the heart of the organization and requires attention from within.
2. Develop a healthy, internal climate inside the organization. This would include the philosophy of management which regards employees as people and which therefore treats them with respect and understanding and gives them opportunities for participation and self-expression.
3. Recognize the full part that internal communication plays in these objectives. See that employees are kept informed and that there is a proper flow of communication downward, upward, and across the organization. Do more communication planning. Allow time for communication. Emphasize the importance of close personal contacts, getting to know employees as people, giving them opportunity to participate.
4. Develop the ability of supervisors and executive management to be better communicators. This would involve the ability to understand others and use the communication skills of speaking, listening, writing, and reading to the maximum degree of effectiveness.

(Continued on page 32)

# SPEECH AND THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE

by John B. Newman

*Dr. Newman, of Queens College, responded to the Editor's invitation to give our readers guidance on current developments in the field of linguistics. We hope you find it of value — and that you still remember his article on "The Meanings of Poetry," in the September issue!*

**S**PEECH, AS A TERM USED TO DENOTE A FIELD of study, is an American invention of the 20th Century. The field of study it represents, however, can trace its history to Mediterranean Europe in the 5th Century B. C. Today the field is broadly concerned with communication through the spoken word. It embraces original speaking and the oral interpretation of ideas set down by others, as well as the modes, means, and materials necessary for their transmission and reception. The student in this field is concerned with proficiency in the use of the spoken word in its many manifestations in the modern world, and with study and research which will contribute to a better understanding of speech as a process of communication, as a phenomenon of personal and social behavior, and as a physical activity.

The study of language, or linguistics, on the other hand, is concerned almost exclusively with the description and analysis of the structure and form taken in any given circumstance by the language system or linguistic code that is transmitted and received in the physical process of communication. Though comparisons among cases are inevitable, the student of language, or linguistic scientist, must nevertheless constantly guard against his studying language *in vacuo*. Though his interest, by definition, centers on the description and analysis of the structure and form of the language system, he cannot overlook the fact that language systems would not exist without senders and receivers. In order, however, to insure a "scientific formality" and maintain a "rigorous discipline" in the attempt to observe and describe the language systems which are his main concern, and yet not totally disregard the other and at least equally important elements in the communicative situation, students of linguistics have set up a rather elaborate system of precautions to preclude the possibility of "extraneous" factors intruding on their specific analysis of language systems. Thus the whole of the field concerned with language, known technically as *macrolinguistics*, is said to consist of three divi-

sions: *prelinguistics*, *microlinguistics*, and *metalinguistics*.

Prelinguistics is concerned with the study of physical and biological events from the point of view of the organization of the statements about them into systems of data useful to the linguist. . . . [The student of language and languages] must be provided with descriptions of the acoustic nature of speech sounds, of the articulatory movements of . . . the organs of speech, of what happens in the ear, and ultimately, of the neural activity in the brain of the speaker. . . . In each case the linguist wants the data classified for him, or he classifies it himself, in terms of the elements that are useful in his further analyses.<sup>1</sup>

Many of the well-known studies in articulatory phonetics, such as those by Otto Jespersen, Daniel Jones, Kenneth Pike, and many others, and such a study as that by Martin Joos in the field of acoustic phonetics, are considered to be works in prelinguistics "in so far as they orient their observations to data sought for as the basis of microlinguistic analysis."<sup>2</sup>

Microlinguistics, or just simply linguistics, "deals with the analysis of language systems." The student of linguistics is interested much more in the classification and organization of prelinguistic data than in the observation and analysis of the particular utterances which make up the bulk of that raw data. It can be said, then, that the student of linguistics is not individually oriented in that he is not particularly concerned with individual instances, individual cases, and individual circumstances, but rather with systems — that is, those systems and those systems of systems of prelinguistic features in communication that are independent of the volition of their individual users.

Finally, metalinguistics is concerned with the denotation and connotation, the reference, designation, and interpretation — in short, with the "mean-

<sup>1</sup> George L. Trager, "The Field of Linguistics," *Studies in Linguistics: Occasional Papers* 1 (Norman, Oklahoma, 1950), p. 2-3.  
<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.



ing" — of the language system or linguistic code as a whole and of the various parts which, separately and conjunctively, make it up.

Language has been indicated as being only one of the systematic arrangements of cultural items that societies possess. A culture consists of many such systems — language, social organization, religion, technology, law, etc. Each of these cultural systems other than language is dependent on language for its organization and existence, but otherwise constitutes an independent system whose patterning may be described. In theory, when one has arrived at the separate statements of each such cultural system, one can then proceed to a comparison with the linguistic system. The full statement of the point-by-point and pattern-by-pattern relations between the language and any of the other cultural systems will contain all the 'meanings' of the linguistic forms, and will constitute the metalinguistics of that culture. . . . The statement of the meanings of linguistic forms is dependent on the formulations of other cultural systems than language, and the technical applications of linguistic analysis — such as language teaching and language learning, are largely metalinguistic.<sup>3</sup>

To a considerable extent the field of Speech transcends language. This is not to say that it is not concerned with language, but rather that the principles of Speech can be practiced, and the principles and practices of Speech can be taught, anywhere — regardless of the particular language or dialect spoken in the community in which the event may be taking place or in which the classroom happens to be located. The field of Speech is broadly, and primarily, concerned with communication; but the words, the constituent parts that make up that communication, *need not even be spoken!*

It has been said, for instance, that although delivery is "the natural destiny of a speech," imparting "an actuality, an authenticity" to it, delivery does not determine a speech.

Isocrates' *Areopagiticus* was not delivered, was not intended to be delivered, but it has served as a model speech for 2300 years. In the work-a-day world of speeches, frequently a speech text never gets delivered. Senator Joseph R. McCarthy, when under consideration for censure by the Senate, released a speech which was front-paged across the country. He was so busy he did not actually speak it, but

had it "inserted in the [Congressional] Record." Whatever merits the speech may have, whether it is a speech at all, will have to be determined by something other than a study of the Senator's voice and gesture.<sup>4</sup>

A speech, then, is not determined by the fact that it was, or is, *spoken*, but by its "form," which is described as:

. . . a prose composition of varying length, fashioned for a specific or generic audience, usually but not necessarily spoken and listened to, . . . in which are inter-related author, reading or listening audience, theme, and occasion; . . . [whose] purpose is to direct the reader or listener to a conclusion selected by the composer.<sup>5</sup>

Another example of the fact that the field of Speech (despite its name) does not require that communication be *spoken* has to do with the use of gestures, facial expression, and bodily movements and with the use of pause and silence in "speaking." These "speech" elements are important not only in terms of delivery but also bear upon the transmission of attitude, tone, and mood from sender to receiver. In turn, these elements give rise to the reception of connotation, implication, multiple meaning, and other manifestations of "non-verbal" communication. The effectiveness of an actor, a reader, a teacher or lecturer, as well as a speaker, is determined to as great a degree by what is *consciously* and *purposefully* not said aloud as by that to which is given actual utterance.

In other words, the central concern of the field of Speech has to do with the receiver's "discriminatory response,"<sup>6</sup> previously determined by the sender and brought about by his proficient use of a system of language systems. The central concern of linguistics, on the other hand, has to do with the message — coded (presumably with proficiency) by the sender in a particular language system. The thoughts and actions of the sender and the receiver prior to their respective transmission and reception of the message, as well as any other factors relevant to the situation prior to the message are considered *prelinguistic*; while the sense, feeling, tones, and intention of the message, the occasion on which it is transmitted, and the interrelationships that exist among these elements are considered *metalinguistic*. Thus, the descriptive analysis of the structure of the language sys-

<sup>4</sup> Richard Murphy, "The Speech as Literary Genre," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XLIV (1958), 120.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119.

<sup>6</sup> S. S. Stevens, "A Definition of Communication," *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, XXII (1950), 689.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

tem in which the message is coded remains the central concern of the field of linguistics.

Before relationships can be determined between the field of Speech and the study of language, it is essential that the usage of the terms involved be discriminated. "The study of language" has here been used for the rather cumbersome *macrolinguistics*, the covering term for the whole of the field concerned with language. *Linguistics*, it must be remembered, is actually short for *microlinguistics*, which deals with the analysis of language systems. Since the field of Speech is concerned with the *totality* of the communicative situation, it is obvious that it is only with the study of language, the *whole* of the field concerned with the subject, that any complete relationships can be determined. Any relationships between Speech and linguistics will, at best, be partial; and it could be said that the confusions and dilemmas that arise in their conjunction and in the attempt to integrate the two fields is necessarily the result of the difference in the scope and the purpose of the two fields. It is noteworthy that such attempts are very rarely, if ever, attempted by the student of linguistics. Those in the field of Speech who have made such attempts have found that they suffer the tortures of the victims of Procrustes, and for obvious reasons.

In the preface to his book on *Modern Linguistics*, Simeon Potter points out that:

Whereas in the first six chapters I have adhered fairly closely to accepted opinion in stating the main facts relating to phonology, morphology, syntax and vocabulary, and have not gone very far out of my way to introduce discussions on controversial topics, in the last two chapters I have ventured to offer more personal views on the omnipresence in utterances, and segments of utterances, of the form-meaning complementary relationship (like the two sides of a coin), and on the future of world communication.<sup>7</sup>

The "controversy" referred to necessitating the apologetic offering of "personal views" on a subject which prides itself on the objectivity and "scientific rigor" of its observations and analysis is nothing more than a jurisdictional dispute having to do with what is *linguistic* (*qua* "linguistics") and what is not. The accusations, that certain factors entirely pertinent to communication brought to bear in the consideration of linguistic problems are impertinently "*metalinguistic*," have veritably made of that a term of opprobrium. A good portion of the

<sup>7</sup> (Fair Lawn, New Jersey, 1957), p. 7.

work of Benjamin Lee Whorf was so adumbrated, and hence was publishable in his lifetime only in various scattered periodicals that were not especially concerned with the subject of language study. Only recently, under the status-bearing rubric of "The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis," in which elements of his work are seen to be similar, perhaps derived, from the philosophy of language expressed by the noted linguistic-anthropologist Edward Sapir,<sup>8</sup> were some of his writings collected and published first in pamphlet form under the title of *Four Articles on Metalinguistics* (Washington, 1950) and finally in a single volume entitled *Language, Thought, and Reality* (New York, 1956).

The field of Speech, as a humanistic discipline, cannot brook with such a narrowed point of view. The student in the field of Speech must concern himself with every element and factor in the communicative situation, with the mechanics of respiration in regard to the utterance of sound as well as the sequence and relation of the ideas expressed by the speaker, with the meaning of the words used to express those ideas as well as the evaluation of the ideas themselves, and with the response of the audience in the light of the time and the place of the reception of those same ideas uttered by the breath of the speaker in the first place. Regardless of whether the factors involved are prelinguistic, microlinguistic, metalinguistic, or even "exo"-linguistic, the student in the field of Speech remains continually concerned with *the total communicative situation*. Nonetheless, there are certain important ideas and concepts that the student of Speech can derive from the study of language.

Perhaps the greatest contribution that the study of language has made as far as the field of Speech is concerned is the fostering and development of the descriptive approach to speech and language. Though many find it painful to admit, the sins of our elocutionist professional fathers are still with us. Among other things, they fostered the prescriptive approach, dictating what is "correct" in speech and language. Today "the usage concept" prevails, based on the premise that "language is the actual linguistic behavior of native speakers."

Nevertheless, the old notion persists—in some quarters as strongly as it ever did in the eighteenth century—that there is some other source and sanction for language, and that the linguistic behavior of the great majority of

<sup>8</sup> See Sapir's *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech* (New York, 1921) and *Selected Writings in Language, Culture, and Personality*, ed. D. G. Mandelbaum (Berkeley, Calif., 1949).

<sup>9</sup> W. Nelson Francis, *The Structure of American English* (New York, 1958), p. 567.

native speakers is in some way degenerate and corrupt.<sup>10</sup>

Certainly it is the duty of the teacher of Speech "to disabuse his students of this notion, which leads to linguistic uncertainty, self-consciousness, and timid commonplaceness."<sup>11</sup>

Although no one denies that the voice and articulation of a teacher of Speech should be clear, pleasant, and intelligible, the concept of the teacher's speech as a "model" is fraught with danger. If by "model" is meant an example to imitate, there is the possibility of the imposition of dialect features (whether they be regional, class, or occupational) under the guise of "speech improvement." For instance:

Many teachers for whom words like *whale* regularly begin with /hw/ spend a good deal of time attempting to teach this pronunciation to those whose native dialects do not contain this initial combination, and for whom *wail* and *whale* are both /wéyl/. This distinction may be aesthetically or socially desirable, though half the speakers of English lack it. But the teacher who insists upon it must be aware that he is imposing a dialect feature, not "correcting an error in speech."<sup>12</sup>

Any teacher of Speech deserving of the title should be sufficiently informed about the structure and relationships among language, speech and dialect so that the help he offers his students will be help indeed and not simply the assertion of a "transcendental, authoritarian 'correctness' in language which is to be approached only by suppressing the instinctive and the natural."<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, if "good speech" — standard speech — is presented to the student as "another dialect" — the common dialect of educated persons:

... he will be able to see that it is possible for him to master that dialect and thus become a member of the guild of the educated without eradicating the other dialects in which he conducts the affairs of his everyday life.<sup>14</sup>

"Words are the greatest, the most momentous of all our inventions, and the specifically human realm is the realm of language."<sup>15</sup>

We live, each one of us, immersed in language, and our thoughts, feelings and behavior are, to a much greater extent than we care to admit, determined by the words and syntax of our native tongue and even by the signs

through which those words and that syntax are made visible in writing.<sup>16</sup>

Nevertheless, "without language we should merely be hairless chimpanzees." Man is "an ape that has learned to talk — an immortal spirit that has not yet learned to dispense with words," an amphibian living "half in fact and half in words, half in immediate experience and half in abstract notions." Without insight, without constant guard, we can become "the slaves of our clichés and be turned into conforming Babbits or into fanatics and doctrinaires."<sup>17</sup>

Concerned as he is with the receiver's discriminatory response, previously determined by the sender and brought about by his proficient use of a system of language systems, the student in the field of Speech must of necessity have "insight into the relationships between the word and the referent, into the processes of abstraction, metaphor, and analogy, and into the way language controls thought even more powerfully than thought can control language."<sup>18</sup> These matters lie within the area of semantics<sup>19</sup> and, though metalinguistic, are part of the study of language.

Space does not permit a fuller discussion here. But those who may be interested in this aspect of the study might well begin their reading with Bess Sonde's recent *The Humanity of Words: A Primer of Semantics* (Cleveland, 1958) which, besides presenting a field theory of communication, abstracts and analyzes C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards' *The Meaning of Meaning* (New York, 1938); Alfred Korzybski's *Science and Sanity* (Lakeville, Conn., 1958); and Charles Morris' *Signs, Language and Behavior* (New York, 1955) and *The Open Self* (New York, 1948). Anyone who has read these books, as well as Stephen Ullmann's *The Principles of Semantics* (New York, 1957), may consider himself well read on the subject.

Besides the books and articles cited here thus far, there are three that a student in the field of Speech will find educative in the study of language. *An Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics* (New York, 1955) by H. A. Gleason, Jr., presents as simple and yet as solid a first essay into a complex and difficult field as has yet been produced. Ray L. Birdwhistell's *Introduction to Kinesics* (Louisville, Kentucky, 1952) presents a system for the analysis of the body motions and gestures that accompany and support speech in the language sys-

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 550.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 569.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 567.

<sup>15</sup> Aldous Huxley, *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Other Essays* (New York, 1956), p. 79.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 193.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 2, 4.

<sup>18</sup> Francis, p. 568.

<sup>19</sup> See my article on this subject in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XLIII (1957), 155-164.



tem of human communication that should be of special interest to the student in the field of Speech. Finally, Colin Cherry's *On Human Communication* (New York, 1957) presents as comprehensive an introduction to the whole of the field concerned with language as can probably be found in a single volume.

The field of Speech covers a wide area of study, ranging from the fine arts through the useful arts to the sciences. The scientific areas of the field of Speech are either prelinguistic or metalinguistic. But nothing exists in the system of language which did not first occur in the activity of speech. Just as the student of language maintains a continuing interest in speech as a process of communication, so must the student of Speech maintain a continuing interest in the system of language as a phenomenon of culture. So will a true integration be achieved and maintained between the field of Speech and the study of language.

<sup>20</sup> See William J. Entwistle, *Aspects of Language* (London, 1953), especially p. 73.

## CUSTOMER RELATIONS

(Continued from page 27)

5. Develop the ability of employees, particularly those who meet and deal with the public, as communicators. Particular emphasis would be placed on interpersonal speaking and listening and the development of attitudes even more than skills.

There is no easy road to attaining these objectives, and we will never reach them perfectly. We will always be striving toward the goal. We are dealing here with the highest kind of refinement of human conduct, and we know that it is much easier to set up a system of mechanical rules than it is to build a climate and attitudes based on solid understandings of each other as people. It might take just a few minutes to tell an employee exactly what you want him to say or do when he answers a telephone or greets a customer. But if he just goes through the motions and doesn't really *feel* what he is doing, we are not building the kinds of attitudes that will be permanent and meaningful. We should not look for quick remedies or panaceas in our attempt to build a healthy combination of relationships inside the organization that will inevitably improve our customer relations.

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# WHY JOHNNY CAN'T SPEAK

by Enid Gordon Wolf

*Miss Wolf is a speech therapist in the public schools of Philadelphia.*

**J**OHNNY SMITH IS BORN with the same potential for good speech as any other child. He has normal intelligence, good health, a pleasant personality, good environment and nothing wrong with his tongue, lips, palate or vocal cords.

Yet, when Johnny reaches three or four, an age when his speech development should be moving along rapidly, he still speaks as he did when he was one or two years old. When he is five or six and continues to be difficult to understand or speaks very little his parents rightly become alarmed.

This is not an unusual story. It happens time and time again; and each time it is just as upsetting to the parents involved.

The grownups around Johnny are not able to determine the root of the problem. Grandma is disappointed in him; all her other grandchildren are quick in learning to speak. Aunt Mary is sure Johnny isn't as bright as her Billy. Sally, next door, is sure he doesn't hear well. Dr. Jones is confident Johnny will outgrow it; and Miss Brown, Johnny's nursery school teacher, hasn't taken much notice — there are so many children around and they all sound alike to her.

Instead of just guessing or taking chances, a smart Mom and Dad will take Johnny to the local speech and hearing center for a checkup.

Here they will find a group of competent, well-trained people who are able to look at the facts objectively and apply to Johnny's problem the scientific knowledge they have learned in various universities and from their experiences with hundreds of other children.

The therapists will give Johnny several tests and spend a good deal of time just talking to him. Then they are able to call in Johnny's parents to discuss and offer some solution to their son's problem.

Usually the term applied to Johnny's difficulty is "articulation problem." The therapist will say he has (1) omissions, (2) distortions, (3) substitutions or (4) additions to speech sound. Because they make his words sound different, these all make Johnny hard to understand.

To explain, an omission would be "nana" for banana or "boo" for book; a distortion would be

an "s" coming out over the sides of the tongue instead of the front, causing a lateral emission lisp; a substitution is saying "wed" for red or "wid" for with; and an addition could be "co-ut" for coat, in which an "uh" sound has been added. These are just a few examples of innumerable articulation defects which can occur.

In addition to this, Johnny may speak rapidly, leave out words, have poor grammar or just not speak very much at all.

This is Johnny, and, wide-eyed, his parents want to know why.

One or a combination of several factors could be at fault. One problem would be lack of stimulation. We all begin to speak by first hearing others speak, trying to say the same things ourselves, getting pleasure from this, and being encouraged by someone in whom we have confidence to continue this pleasurable activity.

If when Johnny was a small baby he was left alone too much and did not hear many sounds of speech; if he was hushed every time he made a noise; if he was ridiculed or ignored when he made these sounds or if there was no one around in whom he had confidence — if any of these conditions were present, then the normal processes by which he should have learned to speak would have been interrupted.

Children also need the stimulation of other children. If Johnny had no one to "speak to" when he was two or three, he may never have learned the normal "give and take" of speech and just doesn't know how to begin when he is faced with it.

If there are always many talkative people around his house, the competition may be too keen and he meets with frustration through lack of direct stimulation.

Conversely, too, Johnny could be over-stimulated. Day and night, either Mommy or Daddy or both sit him down for a two- or three-hour "talk" so he will be "the smartest kid on the block." Poor Johnny doesn't know what this noise is all about, so he simply shuts his ears to it. Also, if his parents force him to attempt speech when he isn't ready, Johnny may rebel almost to silence.

If Johnny has a twin with whom he has many

interesting conversations, the two of them, being so close, may have developed a language of their own that isn't understandable by anyone else.

It's possible that Johnny's parents may give him just the right amount of stimulation and he is "raring" to talk. But every time he opens his mouth, Mommy, Daddy or Aunt Mary step in and say, "Here is what you want, Johnny dear" even before he asks. Soon Johnny decides that trying to talk is too much trouble. He can get what he wants without saying a word, so why bother with speech?

Sometimes, even though they may not realize it, parents may be setting a poor example for Johnny.

They may not be aware of slight inaccuracies in their own speech that Johnny is copying. For instance, they may be speaking quickly and slurring words, or speaking so loudly or softly that he has difficulty comprehending what they say. Thus Johnny is saying what he thinks he hears and it turns out to be incorrect. Also, Aunt May may have a speech defect resulting from a cleft palate, and Johnny thinks he should try to talk as she does since Mommy and Daddy seem to like her; or Sue, down the street, gets so much attention with her lisp that he wants one, too; or Jimmy, who is his hero, says things a certain way, so why shouldn't he?

In this same vein, when Johnny was learning to speak he may have had a close relationship of some kind with someone who spoke with a foreign tongue. This in itself may have caused a confusion in his speech which carried over. He doesn't know which language he is supposed to speak and probably confuses the words of one language with another.

Johnny could be one of those children who have difficulty distinguishing between two similar sounds. This is not necessarily caused by a hearing loss; it just may be that he never has been trained to listen carefully.

If at some time when Johnny was developing speech he had an illness which caused temporary hearing loss, throat infection, or similar sickness,

he may have found talking a difficult task so that he didn't want to try too hard again when he got better. The same effect could come about from a traumatic experience of any kind.

Then, too, Johnny may have just an old-fashioned inferiority complex. He isn't as quick to learn as the other boys or girls — or big brother or sister out-talk him — so he is afraid to try since he can't compete anyway. A fear complex developed in any skill can carry over into speech.

If Johnny has moved from another part of the United States, or has come here from a foreign land, the problem may simply be one of readjusting his accent to suit his new environment.

Last but not least is the problem of parents who encourage errors. Doting Daddy or Grandma think a lisp or babytalk is "cute." Certainly Johnny, knowing this speech pleases them, will hate to give it up.

All this boils down to one big factor: there is a point in every child's life (usually between the age of one and four years) when he is ready to learn speech, just as there is a best time for him to learn to walk. If during this time he meets with some such interference as those mentioned, his organs of articulation will not be trained properly to do the difficult job of communication. When he reaches the age where good speech should be an accomplished fact, he will be sadly lacking.

The problem discussed here, it must be remembered, is that of a normal child and not one affected by a physical disability — such as a cleft palate, hearing loss, cerebral palsy, aphasia or other organic impairment. These are all special cases, each having its own problems.

No one little boy or girl will have the same factors as any other predisposing him to a speech problem and certainly not every reason could be stated in one short article. But, if parents can better understand why a healthy Johnny can't speak, they will better know how to help him. And perhaps, too, his little brother, cousin or the baby next door will have a better chance to acquire good speech.

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"This, then, will be the clue to our inquiry. We shall assume that what each man does is based not on direct and certain knowledge, but on pictures made by himself or given to him. . . . The way in which the world is imagined determines at any particular moment what men will do."

— Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion*, Penguin edition, 1946, p. 17



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